

REMARKS on a BOOK

Lately published, and entitled

*A full, true, and comprehensive View of Christianity,
during the four first Centuries, succinctly and fully
laid down in two Catechisms, a shorter and a longer;*

WHEREIN

That Writer's many *Popish, dubious, false, and frivolous*

DOCTRINES and POSITIONS,

Together with several

UN SOUND REASONINGS

AND

MISREPRESENTATIONS of SCRIPTURE,
Are Discovered and Confuted.

Ходатайство

о помиловании

и отпущении

заточения

взыскания

и иных наказаний

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U N S O U N D R E A S O N I N G S

AND

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Are Discovered and Confuted.

By an Eminent and Learned Protestant Gentleman.

Other Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any Man build upon this Foundation, Gold, Silver, precious Stones, Wood, Hay, Stubble; every Man's Work shall be made manifest—for the Fire shall try every Man's Work of what Sort it is. If any Man's Work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a Reward: If any Man's Work shall be burnt, he shall suffer Loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by Fire. 1 Cor. iii. 11, &c.

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10 FE 60

TO

TO THE
WARDEN
AND
FELLOWS
OF
MANCHESTER-COLLEGE.

REVD. and WORTHY SIRS,

THESE Remarks (such as The Occasion of these Remarks. they are) I was soon deter-
min'd to address to you, and, through your Hands, to convey them to the Publick; not only because they were occasion'd by my reading a very dangerous Book, with a very specious Title, said to have been written in your Neighbourhood; but because they

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they sprung from the same Principles, an Aversion to Popery in every Shape, a sincere Love for the Reformation, and an honest Zeal for the Advancement of the Protestant Cause, which, in the Reign of a most glorious Queen, gave Rise to your present Establishment, and laid the Foundation of your Society.

Our first Reformers, whose Names deserve to be continued in perpetual Memory (says the learned (a) Dr. Heylin) were Men famous in their Generations, and the Honour of the Age, wherein they lived. They were Men of Renown too (whatever this Writer may insinuate to the contrary) for their Piety and Prudence, their Sagacity and Learning; well vers'd in the Oracles of God, and thoroughly acquainted with all the true Monuments of primitive Antiquity; and therefore I thought

(a) Reformation Vindicated.

that

that it wou'd be an Office, not altogether unacceptable to you, to attempt to vindicate the Character of those renowned Men (who were your original Patrons, and generous Benefactors) from the Slight and Indignity which this Anonymous Writer, out of an high Conceit of himself, and a vain Ostentation of his Learning, endeavours to throw upon them; as if * They had been * P. 437. destitute of His great Insight into the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Ancient Church; knew nothing what Original and Apostolic Traditions meant; had never heard what Rites and Observances were in Practice from the first Beginning of Christianity; and, for want of these Premisses therefore, when they undertook to reform Religion, went blindly to work: For, if we are to credit this Author, they quite defac'd her, by throwing away many Things, that shou'd have been retain'd, and stript her of her chief

chief Beauty and Ornaments, until he (happy Man!) by a long and laborious Search into the Faith, Practice, Worship, and Rituals, of the first four Centuries, found out the Secret to recover her from the Deformation, rather than Reformation, they had brought upon her; and so restored her to her former Grace and Comeliness.

The Cate-
chist's De-
sign in
writing
his Book.

This certainly, in the main, seems to be the Purport of his whole Performance; to recommend (but covertly) the Communion of the Church of Rome; and, at the same time, to give himself an Air of Superiority above our wise and great Reformers. Finding however, in his Preface, ^{* P. 12.} that there were many Divines (who cou'd believe it?) Men of Eminence and Distinction in Classical Learning, who were far from understanding the Holy Scripture; who were Strangers to Ecclesiastical Antiquity,

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Antiquity, and Apostolical Traditions ; and who were unacquainted with the Body of the Christian Doctrine, and the Series and Connection of God's Designs, and of the Divine Providence over us ; *I cou'd think of none so proper a Workman as himself, (a) to build the old waste Places, and to raise up the Foundations of many Generations, thereby to make himself a Name, and that he might be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Paths to dwell in. But, when I enter'd farther into his Book, and found him pursuing quite different Designs ; reviving Doctrines that had been exploded, because absurd and unscriptural ; restoring Practices, that had been disus'd, because of their Tendency to Superstition ; and asserting the Necessity of both, by the same Arguments, and from*

(a) *Isai. lviii. 12.*

the

the same Authorities, that our Adversaries of the Church of Rome employ to that Purpose: When I found him tacitly impeaching the Scriptures of Insufficiency, by substituting Traditions in their Room; making the holy Fathers of equal Authority with the blessed Apostles; and loading us with (a) an heavy Yoke of trifling and insignificant Ceremonies, which neither our Forefathers, nor we, were able to bear; I began then to suspect, that, whatever his Pretences might be, his real Design was to lead his unwary Reader within the very Confines of Popery; while he was doing this, to conceal himself under some little Variations and Refinements from it; to amuse him with a pompous Shew of ancient Learning all the while; and, by interspersing some sound, some useful, and many fair and

(a) Acts xv. 10.

plausible

plausible Things in the Body of his Work, to gild the poisonous Pill, he was going to administer.

I indeed am an utter Stranger to this Writer's Person; nor have I any Knowledge of his Character, but what appears from his Book. From it I perceive that he is a Person of Learning, and Sufficiency enough; well read in the Scriptures and the Fathers; and no Stranger to Perspicuity of Stile and Method. A Strain of Piety, and an ardent Zeal for the Advancement of what he calls Truth, run through the whole Performance; and the Pains he has taken (unless he had his Testimonies at second Hand) in consulting both ancient and modern Authors for Materials, is not a little conspicuous.

But may not all this fine Apparatus be on purpose to inveigle and ensnare? May not this be the Sheep's-cloathing, What Reason there is to suspect him.

cloathing, which our Saviour bids us beware of? And, under this Disguise, May not very bad and pernicious Designs be conceal'd? It is remark'd (a) of the Heretic Nestorius, that he was a Man of much Eloquence, and a very plausible Writer. Pelagius (as St. Austin confesses) was a Person of uncommon Sanctity, and thereby prevail'd with many to embrace his Errors. The Pharisees of old (as our Saviour (b) observes) wou'd compass Sea and LAND to make one Proselyte: and the Donatists in Africa, when they had fallen into Apostasy, took Delight in pulling others down, and upbraided the Orthodox, who continued in the Bosom of the Church, with being dull and stupid Drones. So that there is no Trusting to Appearances, where sufficient Reason is given us to suspect a bad Design.

(a) Vid. Comber on Ordinat.

(b) Matt. xxiii. 15.

(a) Satan

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(a) Satan himself is sometimes transform'd into an Angel of Light: and therefore it is no great Thing, if his Ministers be likewise transform'd as the Ministers of Righteousness. *Good Reason therefore had St. Paul, (perceiving, by the Spirit of God, (b) that not only grievous Wolves wou'd enter in, and destroy the Flock, but that also of ourselves wou'd Men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them) to beseech all good Christians, (c) to mark those, who caused Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine, which they had learn'd, and to avoid them: For they, that are such, says he, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Belly; and, by good Words, and fair Speeches, deceive the Hearts of the Simple, (d) who are carried about with every Wind*

(a) 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. (b) Acts xx. 28. (c) Rom. xvi. 17. (d) Eph. iv. 14.

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of Doctrine, by the Sleight of Men, and the cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceiye.

*His Art in
concealing
himself.*

There is one Piece of Management, in order to conceal himself, that I cannot but greatly admire in this Writer, and that is his suppressing the Names of the Authors, from whom he has compil'd the greatest Part of his Work: for, had he not done this; but fairly quoted every Author, as he had Occasion to borrow from him, we had seen his Margin crowded with Bellarmin, Cressy, Perron, Serjeant, Stapleton, White, the famous Bishop of Meaux, and several others; whereas it is now all fair Paper: Nor has he thought proper to signify his Acquaintance with any one of these, in the Account which he gives us of other Ecclesiastical Writers referr'd to by him in his Book, and commemorated in

in his long Appendix ; which is enough to make one suspect, that, when we find him differing from the Church of Rome in some Particulars, * varying and diversifying her * P. 224, adventitious Sacraments, both as to Number and Order ; † extenuating † P. 296, her Doctrine of the real Presence, in that of the Lord's Supper ; § blaming her Practice in with- § P. 307, holding the Cup from the Laity, as she does ; and contending so earnestly || for Trine Immersion, and || P. 323. a Taste of Milk and Honey in Baptism ; ‡ the Mixture of Water ‡ P. 316. in the Sacramental Wine, and * the Infants Right to partake of * P. 343. the Eucharist, which she disallows ; or, at least does not decree to be essentially necessary to Salvation ; we cannot but suspect, I say, that his Policy is to personate, in some Measure, a Protestant of one Kind or other ; just in the same Manner, as an hostile Privateer, while sailing in the British Channel, puts out false

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false Colours, *that it may pass along undiscover'd, unobserv'd, and, when it is got out of Sight, may shape its Course another Way, and so arrive at its proper Port with more Expedition and Security.*

His probable Design in publishing his Work.

What might possibly be our Catechist's Motive to publish a Work of this Nature, which, he cou'd not but foresee, wou'd give the Protestant World sufficient Cause of Offence; whether it was to justify his own Conduct, in separating from our public Worship, by Reason of its Defectiveness; or to gratify his Ambition, in seeking his own Glory, by setting himself at the Head of a Party; or to increase the good Opinion of others, who were taken with his Ministry, and had made Choice of him for their Bishop; or to augment the Number of the Disaffected to our happy Constitution both in Church and State

State ; or to demonstrate the Abundance of his Reading, and superior Knowledge in ancient and abstruse Learning ; or to absolve his misinform'd Conscience, in declaring to the World those Discoveries he imagin'd he had made in Matters of Religion, and in publishing the same, for the Instruction and Edification of the Saints.

This we leave to the Searcher of all Hearts. But, whatever his true Intention might be, it must certainly be acknowledg'd----that, by allowing most of our Adversaries Principles and Practices to be true, and of Apostolical Origin, he has given them a fair Occasion to triumph ; by insisting so strenuously upon the Authority of Tradition, he has settled the Basis of all their corrupt and antisciptural Doctrines ; by representing the Church of England, as defective in several

The Mis-
chief's it
might Oc-
cation.

S. B. & C.
O. & W.
B. & C.
J. & C.

ral Essential Points, he has endeavour'd to put out the bright Eye of the Reformation ; by rejecting the Terms of her Communion, as unlawful, and withdrawing himself from it, he has given Heart and Encouragement to all the wild Sectaries in the Nation ; by unsettling old Foundations, he has filled the Minds of the Serious with endless Scruples and Perplexities ; and, by placing the Merit of Religion in mere TRIFLES, has expos'd it to the Scorn and Derision of the Wicked and Profane, (a) who shoot out the Lip, and shake the Head, saying, Aha ! so wou'd we have it.

And the
Way to
prevent
them.

These, I foresee, must be the necessary Consequences of his Book, if it be suffer'd to pass unanswered. The Poison in it may spread, and diffuse itself far and

(a) Psalm xxiii. 7;

near :

near: And therefore, in order to antidote the World against it, or to expel it, where it has insinuated, I shall set myself, at present, to examine the POPISH, the DUBIOUS, the FALSE, and the FRIVOLOUS Doctrines, that are, here and there, dispers'd in it. This is the Division I rank his Positions under; and in this Method I purpose to handle them; but without following him through all his Citations from the Fathers, or examining whether they be genuine, and to his Purpose or not; for this I conceive wou'd be a tedious, and, I think, a needless Task, if I can but, in some Measure, vacate the Strength of their Authority, by discovering their Weakness, and Liableness to Error, and shewing withal that the only Foundation whereon to fix the Protestant Religion (which we of this Nation profess) is not the Writings,

much less the Rumours of frail and fallible Men, but the sacred Records of God himself, which, like their divine Author, (a) are the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever. I begin with his POPISH Doctrines.

(a) Heb, xiii. 8.

ERRATUM.

Page 99. Line 1. For *Mas*, the Duty; read *Mas* (the Duty);



10 FEB 60

THE

CHAP. I.

Of the CHURCH.

OUR Adversaries of the *Popish* Com-
munion, who are vain enough to
imagine that their Church is the
Universal Church of Christ, stick not to
assert, that she is *infallible* likewise, and
cannot err; and that, consequently, all
her Decrees and Decisions, her Doctrine
and Discipline, her Form of Worship and
(a) Interpretations of Scripture ought to be
received *implicitly*: for which they alledge
some *Arguments* from Reason, but many
more from *Passages*, where they pretend
that this *Privilege* was made over to her,
in the Word of God. Whether our *Cate-
chist*, by his *Universal* Church, means the
same with these vain Pretenders, I cannot
yet determine; but, when we find him
maintaining, that * *no particular Church* * P. 192:
*can be duly constituted, which does not ob-
serve the Rites and Customs, or which has
any Laws contrary to the Rites and Customs
of the Universal Church*; that all her Doc-
trines and Precepts are of the same *Autho-
rity*, and ought to be receiv'd, and observ'd

(a) Vid. *Popish Creed*, Art. 14.

Of the Church.

- P. 143. with the same Respect and Punctuality, * as the Scriptures themselves, because they
- + P. 194. come from the same Fountain; and that + all the Rites and Customs (as well as Doctrines and Precepts) which are inforc'd by Apostolick Tradition, or the Law of the Catholick Church, are necessary to be observ'd by every particular Bishop, unless he wou'd take upon him to be wiser than the Catholick Church, and pretend to a better Rule than Apostolical Tradition; no one can imagine, but that he is an Advocate warm and zealous enough for the Church's *Infallibility*.

Infallibility a bold Claim, and not to be made out by Scripture.

Now, a Church is a Congregation of Persons in some determinate Place, professing the same Religion, worshipping the same God, and united to Christ their Head by Faith, and to one another by Charity and Love: and the Catholick or Universal Church is nothing more, than all the Congregations of this kind, wherever dispers'd over the Face of the whole Earth, brought together into one Body (as it were) and consider'd under one View. But then we cannot conceive, how the Measure of its Extensiveness, or Universality, can contribute to its *Infallibility*, or Exemption from all Manner of Error. (a) " *Infallibility* in any Body of Men whatever (says Ep. Burnet) is a bold and arrogant

(a) On Art. 19.

" *Claim.*

“ Claim. Men, we see, are so apt to be
“ mistaken themselves, and so apt to mis-
“ lead, and impose upon others, that, in
“ all Matters of Religion (more especially
“ in such Points wherein human Interests
“ are concern'd) we have just Reason to
“ suspect, that, either through Ignorance,
“ or Weakness, or Corruption, or Design,
“ they may abuse and misguide us; so that
“ the Authorities and Proofs for this *In-*
“ *fallibility* must be very *express*, since we
“ are sure, that no Church, or Body of
“ Men, can have it among them, but by a
“ *Privilege* from God: and a *Privilege* of
“ so extraordinary a Nature must be gi-
“ ven (if at all) in very plain and very
“ evident Characters.”

Our Saviour indeed, a little before he left the World, told his Disciples, (a) *Lo I am with you even to the End of the World*: but these Words can imply no *Infallibility*, only a Promise of *Protection* and *Assistance*, which was a necessary Encouragement to them, who were to profess a Religion, that wou'd expose them to so much Danger. He tells his Apostles likewise, that (b) *the Comforter, whom he would send unto them, should teach them all Things, and bring all Things to their Remembrance, whatever he had said unto them*: But this is a *Pro-
mise* peculiar to the Apostles, and first

(a) Matth. xxviii. 20.

(b) John xiv. 26.

4
Of the Church.

Preachers of the Gospel, and no ways relating to their *Successors*. That the Apostles themselves should be endued with the fullest and clearest Illuminations of the Spirit, was absolutely needful ; because they were entrusted with the first Establishment of Christianity : but there is not the like Necessity for the Spirit's infallible Guidance in after Ages ; because the Apostles had committed their Doctrines to *Writing*, and their Writings were presently receiv'd as the Standard of the Christian Religion : so that, (a) if, in after Ages, the Church had fallen into Error, it might have reform'd itself, by comparing itself with the Rule of the Apostles Doctrine, contain'd in Scripture. But for this there needed no Gift of Infallibility. Once more, Christ promised his Apostles, that (b) the *Gates of Hell*, all the Designs and Contrivances of the Powers of Darkness, shou'd never be able to *prevail against his Church* : But, in this Promise again, there is no Assurance that the Church was to be *infallible*, tho' it was to be *perpetual* ; or exempted from Errors and Corruptions, tho' it was to continue, as long as the World subsisted : " Many thousand Persons (c) (says the excellent Bp. Pearson) have fallen totally and finally from the Faith profess'd, and

The Universal
Church li-
able to
Error.

(a) Chillingworth, p. 156.
(c) On Acts ix.

(b) Matt. xvi. 18.

“ so apostatized from the Church. Many particular Churches have been wholly lost ; many *Candlesticks* have been remov'd : and if all *Particulars* be defectible, the *Universal* Church, in Consequence, must also be subject of itself to the same Defectibility.” The Truth is, as all particular Churches are composed of Men fallible, and subject to Error ; and as the *Universal* Church is made up of these *Particulars*, no Reason can be given (since the Promises of God are no where engaged to prevent it) why a Spirit of Error and Deception may not creep into the *Universal*, as well as any *particular* Church : and therefore to judge of the Truth or Validity of any Doctrine, or Point of Practice, that claims the Church's *Authority*, without any *Sanction* from Scripture, and has nothing to inforce its Claim, but the uncertain Rumour of an antient *Tradition*, the best Way will be to examine into the State and Condition of the Church, and the Temper and Disposition of its Rulers, at the Time when such Doctrine and Practices may be supposed to have taken Place.

The Christians at first, as (*a*) their History informs us continued daily, with one Accord, in the Temple, and, breaking Bread from House to House, did eat their Meat

(a) Acts ii. 26, 27.

Corrup-
tions crept
into the
Church
very early.

with Gladness, and Singleness of Heart, praising God, and having Favour with all the People: and the Lord added to the Church daily such as shou'd be saved. But these Halcyon-Days did not last long. St. Peter, by the Spirit of Prophecy, foretold, that, among Christians, there (a) shou'd soon arise false Teachers, who would privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them; that many shou'd follow their pernicious Ways, by Reason of whom, the Way of Truth shou'd be evil spoken of; and that thro' Covetousness, with feigned Words, they shou'd make Merchandise of their Brethren: And accordingly it prov'd, for even in the Days of the Apostles themselves, St. Paul informs us, that there were several, who, having first (b) put away a good Conscience, concerning Faith had made Shipwreck; of whom, saith he, are Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have deliver'd unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme; and, in Jerusalem, the Mother Church of all, he seems to intimate that there were Factions and Divisions, about the Observation of the Mosaick Law, even among those who were the Rulers and Governors of it; for these were the Persons, (c) who seem'd to be somewhat, or to make a more than common Figure in the Church;

(a) 2 Pet. ii. 1, &c.

(b) 1 Tim. i. 19, 20.

(c) Gal. ii.

and

and therefore, in another Place, he tells us, that (a) *there must be Heresies amongst us* (the Divine Providence has order'd it so) *that they, who are approv'd, may be made manifest among us:* And, if Matters stood thus in the Beginning of Christianity, it will be difficult to find any other Period of Time, when the Church was exempted from Errors, or in any Capacity to approve itself *Infallible.*

St. Paul tells us of himself that (except in things, that God had order'd him to reveal as necessary to Salvation) (b) *he knew but in Part, and saw, as it were, through a glass darkly:* and therefore, in some particular Cases, we find him declaring that (c) *he had no Command of the Lord, but (as any other prudent Man might do) only gave his own Judgment:* Nor had St. Peter any Character of Infallibility superior to the rest of the Apostles. St. Paul, (d) in his Epistle to the Galatians, asserts the Equality of his own Authority with his ; charges him

(e) with *Dissimulation* in his Behaviour at *Antioch*, and, as he tells us, *withstood him there to the Face, because he was to be blam'd.* And if these two great *Lights* of the Christian Church were neither *infallible* nor *impeccable*; but ignorant in some Things, and culpable in others, What Se-

(a) 1 Cor. xi. 19. (b) 1 Cor. xiii. 12. (c) 1 Cor. vii. 25. (d) Ch. i. (e) Gal. ii. 11.

And so
were
their Suc-
cessors.

curity can we have; that the succeeding Rulers of the Church, who had not the like Guidance of the blessed Spirit, nor such (a) *an Abundance of Revelations* to direct them; who were, therefore, upon several Accounts liable to Errors, and, being fond of their own Opinions, might not be undesirous to have them propagated; What Security, I say, have we, that these Men, of like Passions and Infirmities with ourselves, shou'd be always in the Right? They lived indeed nearer the Times of the Apostles, and therein had the Advantage of us; (b) but we must not therefore take all their Sentences for Oracles, nor, without some better Reason, than their saying it, conclude, that whatever was practis'd or held by the Universal Church, in their Time, must needs have come from the Apostles. Nay put the Case farther, and suppose that any Doctrine or Practice was certainly deriv'd from the Apostolick Age, yet, if upon Examination it be found inconsistent with the written Word of God, we have the Apostle's own Authority for rejecting it: For, (c) tho' we, or an Angel from Heaven, says he, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that, which we have preach'd, and ye receiv'd, let him be accursed.

(a) 2 Cor. xii. 7.
(c) Gal. i. 8, 9.

(b) Chillingworth, p. 162.

Well

Well was it for the Church of Christ, Many Heresies broach'd at this Time, and undue Measures used by the Catholicks. that the *Authentick Writings of the Apostles* were, in due Time, finish'd, to be a *Rule and Standard of Doctrine* to all succeeding Ages; which, in a short Time, gave Birth to such a prodigious Number of *Heresies*, that, in the Compass of the *three first Centuries*, the Learned have reckoned up no fewer than Ninety different Kinds of them; all opposing the true Doctrine of Christ; and, in order to maintain their several Errors, sticking at nothing; but, upon every Turn, either changing, or corrupting Scripture, or producing *Oral Traditions* in Opposition to it; either foisting upon the World *Fables* and idle Romances, or publishing spurious Gospels, and other Tracts, under the Name of the Apostles: While the *Catholicks* on the other Hand, in order to defend Christianity, are allow'd to have gone great Lengths, if not (a) in forging the *Sibylline Oracles* (as some pretend) yet in using such *Acrimony* of Stile against their Adversaries, as did not well suit with the Apostle's Prescription in the Case, (b) *The Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, and in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the Acknowledging of the Truth.*

(a) *Eachard's Eccl. Hist.* vol. ii. (b) *2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.*

How

As to the
Time of
keeping
Easter,
and the
Rebapti-
zation of
Hereticks.

How far Passion and Prejudice may transport Men beyond the *Merits* of the Cause, or the *Bounds* of Charity, is manifest (a) from that *Controversy*, as to the Time of keeping Easter, which divided the *Catholicks* among themselves, and tore the *Eastern* from the *Western* Church, above the Power of any *Synods* or *Councils* to unite them; and from (b) the Dispute about the *Rebaptization* of those who had been baptiz'd by *Hereticks*, which rose to such an Height between *Stephen, Bishop of Rome*, and *St. Cyprian*, that we find them, not only charging one another with bitter *Invectives*, and most unchristian Language, but alarming the greatest Part of *Christendom* with their *Quarrel*, and labouring to bring as many Bishops, as were under their *Influence*, into their Party: So that it was difficult to say, which was the *Universal Church*, or whose Decisions private Christians were to follow, while these two *Controversies* were depending.

In follow-
ing Ages
an Univer-
sal Cor-
ruption in
the Church
until the
Reforma-
tion.

Mean while, “ the Body of Christians (as the same (c) *St. Cyprian* gives us the State of the Church about this Period) studied nothing else, but how to increase their Patrimony; nor had any other Passion, but an insatiable Ardor of

(a) A. D. 196. (b) A. D. 255. (c) *De Lapsis, A. D. 250.*

“ inlarging

“ inlarging their Fortunes—And a great
“ Number of the Bishops (who ought to
“ be an Example and Lesson to the rest)
“ contemning their divine Stewardship,
“ made themselves the Stewards of secular
“ Affairs — and, instead of relieving
“ their hungry Brethren in the Church,
“ were eager only to heap up Money, to
“ seize upon People’s Lands by Treachery
“ and Fraud, and to increase their Stock
“ by exorbitant Usury.” So that here was
a Time for any Doctrine or Practice, that
had Gain and Advantage attending it, to
have made its Entry into the Church ; but
much more after the Establishment of
Christianity by *civil* Laws and Constitu-
tions, when the great Honour and En-
dowments, which religious Princes be-
stowed on the Church, did but inflame
Men’s Passions, and occasion Ambition or
Luxury in those that contended for them,
or were possess’d of them ; and when, in-
stead of (a) the *Fruit of the Spirit*, *Love*,
Joy, *Peace*, *Faith*, *Gentleness*, *Goodness*,
and the like, which might reasonably have
been expected from such an happy *Change*,
we hear of nothing, but (b) *Hatred*, *Vari-
ance*, *Emulations*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Sedition*,
Heresies, and such *Works of the Flesh* as pro-
voked God, in just Judgment for their

(a) Gal. v. 22.

(b) Verse 20.

horrid

horrid Abuses of his Mercy and Goodness, by a sudden Inundation of savage Nations, *Saracens* and *Turks*, quite to extinguish the Light of the Gospel in the *East*: And tho' in the *West* the Devastation was not so universal, yet by the Invasions of *Goths* and *Vandals*, and other *Barbarians*, whom he called from the *North*, and, for their Sins, let in upon the *Romans*, and other neighbouring Nations, (a) *Ignorance* was introduce'd, and, with *Ignorance*, its constant Companion, *Vice*; and, from Age to Age, they so grew and increas'd together, that, about the ninth and tenth Century, *Darkness* and the *Works of Darkness* had totally overspread our *Hemisphere*: For in the *West* (says a (b) great Writer of the *Roman Church*) and almost all the World over (especially among those who were called the *Faithful*) *Faith failed*, and there was no *Fear of God* among them—all kind of *Virtue* gave way, as an useless thing, and *Wickedness* supplied its Place. At which Time (c) *Idleness* and *Ignorance* produced many *Fables*; these *Fables* nourished *Superstition*; and *Superstition* establish'd such *Opinions* and *Practices*, as intirely destroy'd the venerable *Simplicity* of Religion.

(a) Hautteville's Crit. and Hist. Discourse, (b) Bellar. Sacr. L. 1. C. 8. (c) Hautteville, ibid.

(a) " That
bitter

(a) "That such, or worse, was the Condition of the Church in the subsequent Ages, until the *Reformation*, is confirm'd by the unanimous Consent of all Historians; and will any Man, that reads their Testimonies, think it improbable, that the Doctrine of Christ shou'd be deprav'd in such Times as these; or that the most senseless and absurd Tenets might be brought in, under the Notion of Christian Doctrines, when scarce any one knew what the Doctrine of Christ was? When a general Ignorance of Letters, and almost an universal Stupidity and Madness, had seized upon Men's Minds; when there was an horrid Depravation of Manners, and a general Decay of Virtue and Piety, both in the *Priests* and the *People*, both in the Head and Members of the Church."

In this miserable Estate continued the *Church of England* for the Space of 800 ^{thod of its} Years, and upwards. Whatever *Errors* ^{proceeding com-} in Doctrine, or *Corruptions* in Discipline ^{mended.} or Worship, *Rome* had, at any Time, contracted, they were constantly thrust upon *England*; for over *England* she pretended to have an absolute Dominion, until the *Wisdom* of the Nation, unable to endure such *Usurpation* any longer, was, by the

(a) Vid. *Tillotson's Rule of Faith.*

Providence

Of the Church.

Providence of God, directed, in the first Place, (a) to remove the *Supremacy* from the *Pope*, who had no Manner of Title to it, and to restore it to him, whose only Right it was, *the King*; and, in all the future Proceedings of the *Reformation*, to conduct itself by the plain *Rule* deliver'd in Scripture, and according to the *Pattern* of the Church, while it was truly *Apostolical*: “By which Means it came to pass, (b) says one, that all the Corruptions and Abuses of the interjacent Centuries were thrown away, and all, that was truly necessary for the well constituting any Christian Church, was restor'd to its pristine Life and Vigour.” (c) Hence it was, that, when our Forefathers shook off the Yoke of *Papacy*, they still retain'd the primitive and apostolical Institution of *Episcopacy*; when they threw out those Prayers, and other Parts of Worship, which had a Tendency to *Superstition* and *Idolatry*, they, nevertheless, establish'd the Use of *publick Liturgies*; when they put in the Number of *Apocryphal* such *Ecclesiastical Writings*, as were not of sufficient Authority to establish any Point of *Doctrine*, they made no Scruple to receive all such Books as were universally allow'd to be *canonical*; when they abolish'd such *Rites* and *Ceremo-*

(a) Dawson's Origin of Laws.
prim. Eccl. vind. in Proemio.

(b) Bever. Cod. Can.
(c) Bp. Smalridge's Ser.
nies,

nies, as were vain and trifling, they yet took Care to reserve those, that were expressive in their Kind, and venerable in their Use ; nor did they depart any farther from the Church of *Rome*, than she had departed from Truth, and her own self, by her Degeneracy and Corruption.

But tho', in the great Work of the *Reformation*, all this Care was taken of the Church of *England*, (a) *purely to purge away her Dross, and to take away all her Tin*, insomuch that (b) she seems now less to stand in need of a *Super-Reformation*, than any other Church whatever, either in the *Eastern* or *Western* Parts of the World ; yet must we not therefore pronounce her *infallible*, or exempted from all Manner of Error ; for that is a *Privilege*, which no Church upon Earth may claim. She pretends indeed to (c) *have Authority in Matters of Faith*, but this is no ways founded upon *Infallibility*. (d) She thinks (as justly she may) that in a *Multitude* of learned Persons, met together to examine such Differences as may arise, there is more Probability of finding out the Truth, than in a *less Number* ; and therefore, when any *Synod* of her Clergy has so far examin'd a Point, as to settle their Op-

(a) Isa. i. 25. (b) Dawson, *ibid.* (c) Art. 20.
(d) Burnet on the said Art.

nions concerning it, they may certainly *de-
cree* (she thinks) that such is her Doc-
trine, and recommend, with Authority,
the Reception of it to all in her Commu-
nion: But then we must observe, that
this is an Authority of *Order* only, neces-
sary to preserve Peace and Unity, which
the Church, as well as any other Body
Politick, is concern'd to maintain: And,
as it is not an *absolute Authority*, nor
grounded upon a Promise of *Infallibility*,
if any Man cannot make his *private Opin-
ion* agree with the *publick Decisions*, he
is at Liberty; his Conscience is under no
Bonds. This is the whole Extent of any
Church's *legal Power*, and more than this
our Church pretends not to claim; for,
that no Church, no general Councils (which
may err, and sometimes have erred, even
in things pertaining unto God) *have either*
Strength, or Authority, to ordain any Things,
as necessary to Salvation, unless it may be
prov'd, that they are taken out of the Holy
Scripture, is a (a) Declaration that she has
frequently made.

(a) Vid. Art. 6. 20. 21.

C H A P. II.

Of TRADITION.

THE first great Supporters of Tradition were the Jews ; (a) for they supposed, that, whenever God was pleas'd to give his People a Law, that was to be recorded in Scripture, he gave them, at the same Time, another Law, that was to be transmitted to Posterity by Word of Mouth, and without being committed to Writing ; and that both these Laws were of equal Authority, because both derived from the same Original. And, in Conformity to this Conceit, (b) the Romanists contend, " that the Revelation of God's Will, as recorded in the Books of the New Testament, is neither so full, nor so intelligible, as to become a competent Rule of Faith and Manners, and therefore, as an Accession thereunto, the Apostles, in planting the Gospel, left with the Churches sufficient Instructions concerning such Doctrines and Customs, as were to be receiv'd and observ'd in all Places, tho' they were not contain'd in their Writings ; (c) that these Instructions the Apostles receiv'd from the

The Fa-
pist and
Catechist
agree in
their No-
tion of
Tradition.

(a) Prideaux's Connect. p. 1. (b) Bellarmin de Verbo Dei non Scripto. (c) Tillotson's Rule of Faith.

Of Tradition.

“ Mouth of Christ, and deliver’d them to
 “ their Successors, as their Successors did to
 “ their Children, from one Generation to
 “ another; and so the Religion of Christ,
 “ being put in this Method of Convey-
 “ ance, has, in its full Perfection, de-
 “ scended even to the present Age, with-
 “ out any Change or Corruption in its
 “ Passage; and, for this Reason, it is
 “ made (a) an Article of the *Popish Creed*,
 “ to admit and embrace *Apostolical and Ec-
 “ clesiastical Traditions, and the rest of the
 “ Observances and Constitutions of the Catbo-
 “ lick Church.*”

Our Author of the two Catechisms
 • P. 151. seems to be of the same Sentiment. (*) *We call Tradition (says he) the Word of God preserv’d without Writing, as all that he taught the Patriarchs before Moses-----All that the Israelites believ’d, tho’ it was not written in the Law; and all that the Apostles taught, besides what they have written:*

† P. 143. *For, (†) as the Apostles taught much more than they have written, so the rest of their Doctrine and Practice was preserv’d by Tradition alone;*

|| P. 142. *that sacred Depositum (as he calls it) which was deliver’d by Jesus Christ to the Apostles, by the Apostles to the first Bishops, and by them to their Successors, and the Priests of the Universal Church,*

{a) Art. 13.

from

from Age to Age ; and therefore whatever goes under the Name of Apostolick Tradition, and (*) is so called by the Holy Fathers, particularly by those who lived a little after the Apostles, ought to be receiv'd and esteem'd equally with the Scriptures themselves ; (†) because it came from the same Fountain. This, in some Measure, is our Author's Doctrine concerning Tradition. But, before we proceed any farther, it may not be improper (in order to give the Reader a fuller Conception of this Term) to set before him the several *Kinds* or Acceptations of it.

(a) Tradition then, in the Scripture Sense of the Word, denotes that holy Doctrine which was immediately deliver'd by the Apostles to the first Christians, either by Word of Mouth, or by Writing : But, as it is us'd by our Catechist, as well as other Abettors of the Popish Cause, it either signifies the Matter of some particular Doctrine, which is said to have been taught by the Apostles, and is therefore called an *Apostolick Tradition* ; or the Manner, in which it is delivered and handed down from Generation to Generation, in the Writings of the Persons who taught it, and then it is called a *written Tradition* ; or by the Report of others, who some way or other came to the Knowledge of it, and

The several Kinds of it.

(a) Bennet against Popery.

C 2

then

Of Tradition.

then it is called an *unwritten Tradition*. Now of this *Tradition* we must observe, that there are properly two Kinds: For, if by *it* we mean the bare Report of our Ancestors, such as was spread from Father to Son, and so downwards, merely by *Word of Mouth*, 'tis then called *Oral Tradition*; but, if by *it* we understand the Testimony of the ancient Writers of the Church, concerning a particular Doctrine, made Mention of in their Writings, 'tis then distinguished by the Name of *Historical Tradition*. In both these Senses, *viz.* *Oral* and *Historical*, our Author, in his two Catechisms, makes use of the Word *Tradition*, and, in Compliance with him, so must I.

However we may differ in other Points, in this we seem both to be agreed, *viz.* that * *Faith obliges us to believe all that is contained in the sacred Records, because they were written by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost*; but then our *Catechist* goes a great deal farther, and gives us to understand, *that by the Report of all former Generations, and by the Writings of the primitive Fathers* (that is, both by *Oral* and *Historical Tradition*) *there are other Doctrines and Practices, besides those that are recorded in Scripture, taught by the Apostles, received by the Catholick Church, and attested by the primitive Writers*, which, from Time to Time, have

have been handed down to us by this *unwritten Tradition*; and, for the Support of all this, he spends no less than *Eleven Pages*, in * proving the *Necessity of adhering* * P. 193. to *universal Apostolick Tradition*, and in † producing the *concurrent Testimony of Scripture and the Fathers in behalf of it*: But whether the thing was worth all this Labour and Pains, will best appear, by examining a little into the Merit, *first* of his *Oral*, and then of his *Historical Tradition*.

If ever there was a Time, when *Tradition* might pretend to any Certainty, it must have been in the Beginning of the ^{certainty of Oral} *Tradition*. The *Un-*
World, when the *Principles of Religion* were so very few, and the *Period of human Life* so very long. (a) The Existence of one true *God* was, of all other *Doctrines*, the most easy to be preserv'd, as being planted in human *Nature*, and perfectly suited to every *Man's Reason*: The *Scripture* informs us likewise, that *Adam* lived till *Methusalem* was above two *Hundred Years old*; that *Methusalem* lived till *Sem*, the Son of *Noah*, was near an *Hundred*, and that *Sem* outlived *Abraham*: So that this very *Tradition* from *Adam* to *Abraham* had but two Hands to pass thro', and yet we find that, in Process of Time, it was so defac'd and corrupted, and the

(a) *Tillotson's Rule of Faith.*

Of Tradition,

whole World thereupon so overrun with *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*, that God was constrain'd to make new and immediate *Revelations* to the Patriarch *Abraham*.

When to *Abraham* God had now fulfilled his Promise, made of him a *great Nation*, and intended to settle them in an instituted Religion, (a) the Shortness of the Law which he gave them, and the astonishing Manner of its Delivery; the many Rites and Festivities, that were appointed to preserve its Memory; a Succession of Prophets, that, in a continued Course, follow'd one another; and, above all, the visible Tokens of the Presence of God among them, in the *Cloud of Glory* and in the Answers that were given by the *Urim* and *Tummim*, were mighty Advantages on the Side of *Tradition*: and yet, notwithstanding all these, the divine Wisdom did not think fit to entrust his Statutes and Judgments to this fallible and uncertain Way of Conveyance, but gave positive Orders that the whole Law, Moral, Ritual, and Political, shou'd immediately be committed to Writing.

When the Law was committed to Writing, there was this Injunction inserted in it, (b) *What thing so ever I command you, observe to do; thou shalt not add thereto, nor*

(a) Burnet on the Articles.

(b) Deut. xii. 32.

diminish

diminish from it: But, when this Command came once to be neglected, and the *Pharisees* (a leading Sect among the *Jews*) had gain'd Favour and Interest enough to introduce their *Innovations*, and to graft them upon the *Letter* of the Law, we soon hear (a) of many foolish Things, that the People had received to hold, as the *Washing of Cups, and Pots, brazen Vessels, and Tables*, and innumerable other little Rites and Ceremonies, which they most strictly did injoin; and therefore we find our blessed Lord (b) upbraiding them with their *Traditions, whereby they made the Law of God of no Effect*, and telling them very plainly, that *in vain did they worship God, when they taught for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*,

When Christ reveal'd his Doctrine to the World, it was not, in his Life-time, enter'd into Books; because his Disciples and Followers, while he continued with them, had a living *Oracle* to teach them after his Death: the Apostles, who were to publish this Doctrine to the World, were assist'd by an infallible Spirit, which secur'd them from all Error and Mistake in delivering it: But, when this extraordinary Assistance was withdrawn, the Providence of God, that he might make it a

And its
Liableness
to Corrup-
tion.

(a) Mark vii. 4.

(b) Math. xv. 3, &c.

Of Tradition.

fix'd and standing Rule of Truth, took Care to have it committed to Writing. We may observe however, that, when once *Traditions* came to be adopted, as a Supplement to that Writing, Innovations sprung up apace, and, in the Compass of not many Years, we read of the Institution of *Monkery*; of *Praying for the Dead*; of Honours paid to the *Reliques* of Saints and Martyrs; and of the famous Doctrine of *Purgatory*: in one *Sacrament*, of *Infant Communion*, of *Water* mix'd with the *Wine*, of a *Transmutation* of the consecrated Elements into the real Body and Blood of Christ, of a proper and *propitiatory Sacrifice* offer'd for the Living and the Dead; and in the *other*, of the *consecrated Unction*, the *white Garment*, the *Kiss of Peace*, the *Taste of Milk and Honey*, and other such like Fopperies, that the Scripture knows nothing of, and are chiefly to be found in the Practice of the Church of *Rome*, and in those *publick Offices*, which our Author has form'd to himself upon the same Plan.

Since Tradition then is in itself so uncertain a Way of Conveyance, that there can be no Dependance on it, and its Reports, when admitted into the *System* of Religion, make such Havock and Confusion in it, we shou'd be glad to know, what Remedy there is for all this Mischief, or by what Characters

Characters we may be able to distinguish, of the Doctrines and Practices that are handed down to us this Way, which may be *genuine*, and which *spurious*.

Our Author (as well as other Writers of the like Strain) refers us to the *Primitive* Times, when every thing was pure and uncorrupted, and to the *Authority* of the ancient Church, whose Determinations are a sufficient *Directory* in this Case. But all this is loose and extravagant Talk. Our Saviour Christ has foretold us, that, from the very Beginning, (a) *the Enemy wou'd sow Tares among the Wheat*; and never was there a Period of Time in all *Ecclesiastical* History, wherein so many rank *Heresies* were publickly profess'd, and such bold Pretensions made to *Apostolick Tradition*, as in these first Ages. (b) The *Gnosticks*, the *Valentinians*, the *Carpocratians*, and several other *Hereticks* laid Claim to it, and (as they said) made use of it, as a *Key* for the right Understanding of the secret Meaning of many Parts of Scripture; nor can we excuse the *Catholicks* for being in some Measure culpable in this Respect, since they (c) either forg'd and publish'd many *spurious* Books under the Names of Christ, the Apostles and the *Apostolick*

No Way
to remedy
this, be-
cause *false*
Traditions
were hand-
ed about.

(a) Matth. xiii. 25.
(c) Middleton's Introd.

(b) Burnet on the Art.

Writers,

Writers, or, what others had forged, they cited as *genuine*, and applied to the Defence of Christianity: " And surely we need not doubt, but that those, who wou'd either forge, or make use of forged Books, wou'd in the same Cause, and for the same Ends, make use of forged Traditions; so that, had it been our Fate to have liv'd in those *primitive* Ages, we shou'd have been in the same Condition that we are now, under the same Difficulties to distinguish Truth from Falsehood, and every whit as liable, instead of what is *genuine* and *apostolick*, to have either *fraudulent* or *heretical* Traditions foisted upon us."

And spuri-
ous ones
collected
early.

Papias, who lived in the Beginning of the second Century, took a very good Method, one wou'd think, to prevent this Mistake. He convers'd with those who were intimately acquainted with the Apostles, and from their Mouths made a Collection of such Relations, as they were pleas'd to communicate to him; but this Collection, in after Ages, fell into Discredit: *It was fill'd with Fables, and idle Tales*, as (a) *Eusebius* informs us; and its Author look'd upon in no better Light, than that of a *simple* and *credulous* Man. But every one might not have the same Opinion of him: With *weak Heads*, who are always taken with the *Marvellous*, his fabulous

(a) Hist. Eccl. L. 3.

Stories

Stories might pass for real Truths, and his Errors and Falsities be entertain'd as the Sentiments of the Apostles; so that, before *Eusebius*, or any other, appear'd against him, they might have been spread far and wide, and the major Part of Christendom (for the credulous are always the major Part) over-run with Fables and Trifles, that had no Foundation of Truth in them, which ought in all Reason to teach us (according to *Du Pin's* Reflection upon this Author) (a) that there is nothing so dangerous in Matters of Religion, as rashly to believe, or greedily to embrace every thing, that has the Appearance of Piety, without considering whether it be true or no.

Were the Church indeed *infallible* (as our *Catechist*, in Conjunction with all *Popish* Writers, endeavours to represent it) her Determination wou'd be decisive, and put an End to all *Ambiguity* concerning the Truth of each *Tradition*; but this is a *Prerogative*, which the Church of old never pretended to, and several things there are mention'd in *Antiquity*, and supposed to be of *Apostolick Tradition*, which she never undertook to settle or adjust. (b) In the latter End of the *second Century*, the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches were at great Variance concerning the *Observation*

(a) *Biblioth. Tom. i;* (b) *Bennet's Confut. of Popery.*

of

of *Easter*; both equally pretending to *Tradition*. The Churches of *Asia* ground-
ed their Practice upon the Authority of
St. *John* and St. *Philip*; but all other
Churches made use of a different Method,
receiv'd from St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, and
continued down to their Times. Now
here was a proper Opportunity for the
Authority of the Church to interpose, and
decide the Controversy; but we find she
did not: and, consequently, we must ima-
gine, that she look'd upon *Tradition* as
a very precarious and uncertain Thing,
which, in so small a Compass of Time,
and that in the purest Ages of the Church,
cou'd lead so many Persons into so great
an Error, about the Observation of so
great a *Festival*, as that of *Easter*. The
Millennium is another Doctrine, which
found an early Reception in the Church,
and was indeed a *Tradition*, which, if we
will believe *Papias* (as *Irenæus* tells us)
St. *John* receiv'd from the Mouth of Christ
himself. The Doctrine has some plausi-
ble Appearance of Truth, and not many
ill Consequences attending it, and, there-
fore, I have often wonder'd, why our Au-
thor never gave it a Place in his Catalogue
of *Rarities*, until I bethought myself,
that the Church of *Rome* had thought pro-
per to reject it, and that this was Warrant
sufficient for him to pass it by in Silence.

From

From the whole therefore we may conclude this Argument, in the Words of the (a) excellent Chillingworth : " Because by " the Church universal of some Times, " and the Church universal of other " Times, we see plain Contradictions held " and practis'd, both of which cou'd not " come from the *Apostles* (for then the " *Apostles* had been Teachers of Falsehood) " the Belief and Practice of the present " universal Church can therefore be no " infallible Proof, that the Doctrine so " believ'd, and the Custom so practis'd, " came from the *Apostles*."

Our *Catechist* (just as the *Romanists* do)

* having cited some Passages from the * P. 197.
holy *Scriptures*, but many more from the *Paul*
Writings of the *Fathers*, wherever Men- means by
tion is made of the Word *Tradition*, in *Traditions*,
these he plumes himself, and thinks that and how
he has establish'd his Point beyond all Ex- such ought
ception. St. *Paul*, indeed, in his Advice to be re-
Timothy, puts him in Mind, (b) to hold ceiv'd.
*fast the Form of sound Words which he had
beard, and the good Things, which had been
committed to him, to keep*; and, in his
Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, charges them
(c) to hold the *Traditions, which they had been
taught, whether by Word, or by Epistle*; as

(a) Ch. 3. P. 162.
(c) 1 Thess. ii. 15.

(b) 2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

he gives the like Orders (*a*) to the Church of Corinth: By the *Form of sound Words* however, and *that good Thing*, which was committed to Timothy's Keeping, all Commentators are agreed, that we are to understand a short *Compendium* of the Christian Faith, (*b*) the first *Principles of the Oracles of God*, as he elsewhere calls it, or something like the Apostles Creed. Supposing then, that the Apostle, in all the Passages, where *Tradition* is mention'd, may mean the same Thing that he does by his *Depositum*, or *Form of sound Words*, we may farther observe---That, as the Gospel of Christ was to be preach'd to the whole World by a few Persons, and in a short Compass of Time, those, who were employ'd in that Ministry, were oblig'd not to stay long in any Place, but, having preach'd in one City, made a good Number of Converts, ordained Elders, and establish'd a Christian Church, immediately remov'd to another; before they departed however, they left behind them in Writing the *Sum* of what they had taught to the Brethren during their Stay, for the Help of their *Memories*, the Direction of their *Pastors*, and the Prevention of any Misrepresentation, that might afterwards be made, either by *ignorant* or *designing Men*:

(*a*) 1 Cor. xii. 2.

(*b*) Heb. v. 12.

And

And from this Custom it might so come to pass, that, in the first Ages of Christianity, there might be (*a*) as many distinct Gospels, as there were Apostles, written for the proper Use of the Churches which they had planted, and in such a Language, as the *major* Part of their Converts were not unacquainted with. Now, if this was the State of the Case (as we have good Reason to think it was) here we have a clear Account of all the *Traditions*, that St. *Paul* takes notice of; *viz.* that they were short *Summaries* of the Christian Doctrine, which he and his Fellow-labourers were accus-tom'd to leave behind them, *or deposit* in the Churches, which they had planted. 'Tis notorious from the Testimony of *Eusebius*, (*b*) that the Doctrine, which St. *Peter* preached *Orally*, St. *Luke*, his Companion and *Amanuensis*, committed to Writing: But, allowing our *Catechist* his fa-vourite Interpretation of the Word, all that he can make of it is--- (*c*) That the Apostle exhorts all Christian Converts to retain the *Traditions*, or Doctrines, which they had immediately receiv'd from the Mouth of an Apostle, and which he him-self had *personally* deliver'd to them: and no Question there is, but that such Traditions, as are of undoubted *Apostolick Au-*

(*a*) *Luke* i. 1.
Annot. in *Locum.*

(*b*) *Ibid.* L. 5.

(*c*) *Whitby's*

thority,

thority, when we know them to be such, we ought, with all Reverence and Alacrity, to receive; but till our Author can prove that the long Train of Rites, and strange Doctrines, which he wou'd endeavour to obtrude upon us, were immediately receiv'd from the Mouth of an Apostle, we think we have Reason to suspect them, nor will his many *Quotations* from the Writings of the Fathers be of any Service to remove our Suspicion.

The Character of the Fathers and their Writings, and a Summary of the Whole.

The Fathers indeed lived at a nearer Distance to the Fountain-head, and had better Opportunities of Information, than we. They were Persons eminently pious, full of Zeal for the Christian Cause, and strenuous Asserters of its Truth, even with their last Blood; and yet, if we look into their Writings, we shall soon perceive, that they were Men of *like Passions and Infirmities* with their Successors. (a) In their *Disputes*, they sometimes insist upon the slightest Matters, and lay great Stress upon some Arguments, which we cannot think conclusive. In their *Conclusions*, they are sometimes too hasty, and take those things for *substantial Proofs*, which, when narrowly search'd into, appear to have little or nothing to the Purpose. In their *Narrations*, they are apt to give their Fancies

(a) Bennet's Confut.

too

too great a Scope, and to extol or deprecate Persons, or Things, perhaps beyond their due Measure. In their *Interpretations* of Scripture, some are far from being sufficiently clear, and many affect the *Mystical* and *Allegorical* Way, as having something *Enigmatical* in it, which is vastly pleasant and entertaining. In their *Homilies* and Discourses, they drop several *unguarded* Sentiments or Expressions, which our *Adversaries* have laid hold on, and made the Foundation of their *Papery*; and, whenever they come to treat of the Offices of Piety and Devotion, they require of us so many little Rites and Ceremonies, and, upon all Occasions, are so passionately fond of the Word *Tradition*, that we may venture to say, they were far from being Strangers to that famous Collection of *Papias*: (a) "so easy a thing it is, for the
" Mistake of one simple and credulous
" Man, in the Compass of an Age or
" two, to give Occasion to the universal
" Entertainment of a Doctrine, as descend-
" ed from Christ and his Apostles, when
" there is in Reality no such Thing." Thus we see the Uncertainty of *Tradition*, and its Liableness to Corruption; of what noxious Influence it is in Matters of Religion; and that there is no human Remedy

(a) Tillotson's Rule of Faith.

D

against

Of the Scripture.

against its Infection. The Authority of the Church is no Validity, and the Writings of the Fathers are rather injurious, in this Case, and help to inflame the Malignity: so that our only Resource is to what God, in his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, has provided for us, *the Light and sure Guidance of his written Word.*

C H A P. III.

Of the S C R I P T U R E.

The Pa-
pist's and
Catechist's
Conduct
with Re-
gard to
Scripture.

THE Champions of the Church of Rome, whenever they are press'd with the Authority and Sufficiency of the sacred Records, fall into violent Declamations against them, and give them all the opprobrious Language, that they can invent; but our Catechist (it must be own'd) is much more modest. He makes little

* P. 142. or no mention of them; and, in the * *two Lessons*, wherein he gives a full Catalogue of the Books, both *Canonical* and *Apocryphal*, both of the *Old* and *New* Testament,

+ P. 151. he says not one Word in Commendation of any of them; † but runs into his old Strain about the Nature, the Certainty, and the divine Authority of *Tradition*.

|| P. 142. || *The Apostles taught, for the most part, only by Word of Mouth, in Imitation of their Master*

Master Jesus Christ, but took great Care to train up Disciples, who might perpetuate their *Doctrine by Oral Tradition*, as he tells us: But, if we enquire a little into the sacred History, we shall find, that this Assertion is *false in Fact*, and that (a) the Apostles have not given us the least *Hint* of their leaving any thing with the Church, to be convey'd down by *Oral Tradition*, which they themselves had not put in Writing; because Writing, they knew, was the proper Method, that God himself had made Choice of, in order to perpetuate the Remembrance of his Laws.

The ten Commandments God deliver'd ^{Scripture} from Mount *Sinai* with such a Pomp, of ^{the only} ^{sure Way} ^{of Con-} ^{veyance} ; ^{both as to} ^{the old and} ^{new Tes-} ^{tament.} dreadful Solemnity, as cou'd not but make a deep Impression upon the Hearers; but he, in his great Wisdom, foreseeing that, in every succeeding Age, this Impression wou'd grow more dim, and, in a long Revolution of Years, at last be quite lost, (b) did, with his own Finger, write them on *two Tables of Stone*, and all his other Precepts and Ordinances requir'd *Moses* to record (c) in a *Book*, which he delivered to the *Priests and Elders of the People*: Nor was this Method of proceeding without its Use and Advantages in after Ages: For, when,

(a) Burnet on the Art.
(c) Deut. xxxi. 9.

(b) Deut. ix. 10.

(a) in the Reign of *Manasses*, Idolatry had greatly prevailed in *Jerusalem*, it was not by any uncertain Tradition, but by the *Book of the Law found in the Temple*, that *Josiah* was both excited to reform Religion, and instructed how to do it; and, when, in the Days of *Ezra*, the Observation of the Feast of *Tabernacles* had been long disus'd, and its Tradition quite forgotten, it was recover'd by consulting the written Word of God, wherein it was command-ed, that (b) *the Children of Israel should dwell in Booths, in the Feast of the seventh Month*. 'Tis to this Standard of Truth that God remits his People, in order to distinguish between *Divine* and *Diabolical* Inspira-tions,---(c) *To the Law, and to the Testi-mony; if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them*: To this, that our Saviour refers the unbelieving *Jews*, (d) *search the Scrip-tures, for in them ye think (or are persuaded) that ye have eternal Life, and they are they that testify of me*: And, when a Lawyer stood up, and asked him, what he shou'd do to attain a blessed Immor-tality, he did not remind him of any *dormant* Tradition; he did not send him to the *Cabalistical* Divinity of the *Rabbins*, but

(a) *z Kings xxii. 10.* (b) *Neh. viii. 14.* (c) *Isa. viii. 10.* (d) *John v. 39.*

assign'd

assign'd the Scriptures for his Information ;
(a) *What is written in the Law ? How readest thou ? For* (b) *all Scripture is given by divine Inspiration, or (as others render the Words) all divinely inspir'd Scripture is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.*

Such was the Use and Design of writing the old Testament : And, if we look into (c) *Eusebius*, we shall find, that the Account, which he gives us of the new, is in Substance to this Effect,---That St. *Matthew*, having first preach'd the Word of God to the *Jews*, and afterwards resolving, for the same Purpose, to go into other Countries, gave them his *Gospel* in the *vulgar Tongue*, and, by that Means, supplied the Want of his Presence : That St. *Mark*, at the earnest Sollicitation of the *Romans*, was prevail'd upon (as being the Companion of St. *Peter*) to leave them a written Memorial of that Doctrine, which he had deliver'd to them, in the Course of his Preaching : That St. *Luke* (as himself informs us) wrote his *Gospel*, on purpose to *inform Theophilus*, and, in him, all other Christians, of the

(a) *Luke x. 26.* (b) *2 Tim. iii. 16.* (c) *Hist. Eccl. L. 2.*

Of the Scripture.

Certainty of those Things wherein he had been instructed: That St. John, at the earnest Request of the *Asiatick* Bishops, superadded his Gospel, to compleat the rest, and to the Intent (as he tells us) (a) that we might believe, that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have Life through his Name*: And that, to give us a short Account of the Church in its *Infancy*, to explain some Points of Christian Doctrine, and inculcate the great Precepts of Virtue and Godliness, were the true Design of penning the *Acts* and *Epistles* of the Apostles, is manifest from their Contents. But now, what Occasion had there been for these Holy Men to take this Trouble upon them, but that they were fully persuaded, that the Matters, they had to communicate to the World, were too *many*, to be remember'd, and too *momentous*, to be put to the Hazard of being lost or adulterated, in their Passage from one Generation to another? And therefore, to secure them effectually, they held it the best Expedient to commit them to Writing, which (as daily Experience shews) is the only Way of Preservation.

This prov'd by Instances. St. John, in the Conclusion of his Gospel, informs us; that (b) so many Works were done by our blessed Lord, that even a

(a) John xx. 31.

(b) John xxi. 25.

World

World of Books wou'd not have been sufficient to contain them: But now " to shew " you (says the (a) excellent Chillingworth) " how much a more faithful Keeper Re- " cords are, than Report, those few, that " were written, are preserv'd, and be- " liev'd; those, infinitely more, that are " not written, are lost, and vanish'd out " of the Memory of Men.". St. Paul, when he was at *Theffalonia*, gave the Christians there (b) Notice of the *Man of Sin*, the *Son of Perdition*, which, in his Time, or the Time prefix'd for his Coming, was to be reveal'd, and upon what Account he was then retarded from coming: Remember ye not, says he, that, when I was with you, I told you these Things by Word of Mouth, which I now hint to you in this Epistle. But now this Tradition, which was left with the *Theffalonians*, is intirely lost, nor can any one tell what the *Man of Sin*, or what the *Obstruction* of his *Appearance* was, because the Apostle had not set them down in Writing. The Truth is (continues the same Author) " the Primitive Christians, to whom the Apostles wrote their Epistles, did, doubtless, either of themselves understand, or were instructed by the Apostles, what the Sense was of the obscure Places in them.

(a) *Ibid. Ch. iii. P. 163.*(b) 2 *Theff. ii. 3, 5.*

Of the Scripture.

“ Now had these *Traditive Interpretations* been written and dispers’d, as the Scriptures were, they certainly had been preserv’d, as the Scriptures are ; but (to shew how excellent a Keeper of Tradition the Catholick Church is) for want of Writing, they are all lost ; nay were lost a few Ages after Christ, insomuch that, if we consult the ancient Interpreters, we shall hardly find two of them agree about the Sense of one difficult Passage.” So necessary it is, that things of so high Concernment to us, as the Terms of our Salvation, shou’d not be left to fluctuate, but always be fix’d upon the surest Bottom. And, to satisfy ourselves that the sacred Records are such, we may, in the next Place, consider a little by what Hands they have been transmitted to us.

The Canon of Scripture whence convey’d to us.

* P. 152.

Our Catechist indeed (as well as our other Adversaries) is very positive, that, for our Knowledge of the *Canon* of Scripture, we are indebted to *Tradition* ; that ** private Persons* (as he tells us) *cou’d not distinguish between Canonical and Apocryphal Books of Scripture without the Evidence of the Church* : But then, by this *Tradition*, or *Evidence of the Church*, he must necessarily mean *Historical*, and not *Oral Tradition* ; because it is notorious, that the whole Canon of Scripture (except some few Books) was allow’d, and attested from

from the very first. *Irenæus*, who convers'd with *Polycarp*, and others that had been instructed by the Apostles, and immediate Disciples of our Lord, mentions (a) the *Code* of the *New Testament*, as well as of the *Old*, and calls the one, as well as the other, the *Oracles of God, and Writings dictated by his Word and Spirit*: *And Tertullian*, who flourish'd in the second Century, tells us expressly, that (b) *the Law and the Prophets, the Gospels and Apostolick Writings, were the Books, from whence we are to learn our Faith*: Where, by *Apostolick Writings*, he means the *Acts* and *Epistles* of the Apostles in general, as is evident from his *Appealing to them upon all Occasions*.

That the *primitive Christians* had sufficient Means and Opportunities of distinguishing *genuine* and inspir'd *Writings*, from those that were *false* and *spurious*, no one can doubt, who considers, that the *original Writings* of the Apostles themselves (whose Hands they were not unacquainted with) were in their Custody; That, tho' the Apostles wrote to whole Churches, yet particular Men are frequently nam'd in their Epistles, which was a great Means to ascertain their Authority;

(a) Richardson on the Canon of the N. Test.

(b) *De Præscrip. Hæret.* Cap. 36.

That,

Of the Scripture,

That, no sooner were these Epistles sent (as 'tis plain in the Case of St. Paul) to particular Churches, but they were publish'd, and read in their open Assemblies; That *Copies*, authentically attested, were immediately taken of them, sufficient to answer the Number of Churches, which the Apostles had every where settled; and (what is more than all) That, at this Time, there still remained the miraculous (*a*) *Gift of discerning Spirits*, whereby Persons, who were endued with it, were enabled to distinguish true Revelation from *Impostures*.

And how
ascertain'd
and com-
pleted by
St. John.

'Tis reasonable to suppose therefore, that, during this Period of Time, wherein the Helps and Advantages attending the Church were so many, God wou'd provide himself with a proper *Person* to settle and determine the Rule of our Faith, and thereby to preserve the Christian World from all future Uncertainty: and, accordingly, some have observ'd, that St. John, who wrote his Gospel and Epistles against those *Hereticks* chiefly, who were the most notorious *Forgers* of *spurious*, and *Corrupters* of the true Books of Scripture, had his Life prolong'd by Providence, both to vindicate and compleat the whole Canon thereof. 'Tis

(a) 1 Cor. xii. 10.

certain

certain from (a) *Eusebius*, as well as (b) St. *Jerom*, that he revis'd the three other Gospels, before he wrote his own: And *Photius* tells us another Circumstance, viz. that the *Versions* of the Gospels were approv'd by him, as well as the *Originals*: nor can we doubt, but that, in so long a Life, he had seen the Works of the rest of the Apostles, and given them his *Probation*. And, What indeed cou'd be more worthy his Care, and more necessary at that Juncture, than that he shou'd ascertain the *Authority* of those Writings, which were to be the Church's great Preservative against Heresies, and (as *Irenaeus* (c) calls them) in all future Ages, *the Foundation and Pillar of Truth?*

This is the true History of the *Canon* of Scripture, in settling of which Tradition had no Concern. It was the Work of an inspir'd Apostle, receiv'd as such in the earliest Times of Christianity; and, that it continued the same in succeeding Ages without any Addition, or Mutilation, and has so descended to us, its being *translated* into so many Tongues in the *four* first Centuries, and dispers'd into so many Hands in so many diffe-

(a) *Eccl. Hist.* L. 3. c. 24. (b) *Vid. Whitby in his Pref. to St. John's Gospel.* (c) *Adv. Hæret. Lib. 3.*

rent Countries, as well as the *Copies* of great Antiquity still extant among us, are a convincing Argument; especially considering, that the several *Sects* of Christians were, all along, so jealous and watchful over each other, that no *spurious* Piece cou'd be introduc'd, or *genuine* Piece suppress'd, without their Knowledge and Remonstrance. Thus have we sufficient Assurance, not from *Oral* and *Practical* Tradition, which can afford none at all, but from *Apostolick* Determination at first, the Records of Time, and the Testimony of other Books ever since, that the sacred Volumes, which we have in our Hands, are *authentick* and *genuine*, and consequently, must be look'd upon as the only Measure and Standard of our holy Religion; and that therefore all Points, necessary to Salvation, must be contain'd in them.

The Scriptures in themselves not defective; but sufficiently full

The only Grounds, that our Author, and our Adversaries of the Church of *Rome*, can have, for making such a Display of their *Traditions*, is a suppos'd Defect in the sacred Records, and that they do not contain all the Doctrines of the Christian Religion; because the *Apostles did not write much*: and therefore cou'd not, in that Method, deliver several Things, that God had reveal'd to them. But tho' we shou'd allow, that God might make many Discoveries

coveries of his Will to the *first* Planters of the Gospel, which, being not necessary to our Salvation, are, for this Reason, conceal'd from us; yet it does not appear that any of these *extra-scriptural* Doctrines, which are, now a-days, said to have been reveal'd to them, were certainly reveal'd by Almighty God; nor can it be affirm'd, upon just and reasonable Grounds, that any Doctrine, now laying Claim to the Apostles Authority, was actually reveal'd to them by God, if that Doctrine be not contain'd in the Scriptures; and that any Doctrine, not contain'd in the Scriptures, was reveal'd to any other Persons, since the Apostles, is a bold and dangerous Assertion, considering the Severity of St. Paul's Commination, in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, *(a)* *tho' we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed*; which he repeats again in the following Verse, *As I have said before, so say I now again, if any Man preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have receiv'd, let him be accursed*: and if so, what shall we think of those, *"who (as one (b) elegantly expresses it) join the Authority of the primitive Church to that of sacred Writ; who*

(a) Gal. i. 8, 9.

(b) Middleton's Introd. Disc.

" supply

“ supply Doctrines from the ancient Coun-
 “ cils, in which the Scriptures are either
 “ silent or thought defective ; add the
 “ holy Fathers to the College of Apostles ;
 “ and, by ascribing the same Gifts and
 “ Powers to them both, advance the
 “ primitive Traditions to a Parity with
 “ *Apostolick Precepts.*”

And plain. St. Paul, in his farewell Sermon to the Church of *Ephesus*, has these affecting Words--- (a) *And now, behold, I know, that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my Face no more ; wherefore I take you to Record this Day, that I am pure from the Blood of all Men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the Counsel of God :* And, if God thought fit to employ his Apostle in this Office, 'tis incongruous to think, that he shou'd not enable him to speak intelligibly, or rather that God himself shou'd not be able to do so ; since (b) *it is not ye that speak (as our Lord tells his Disciples) but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.* And, in like Manner, if God was minded to have his Revelations recorded in Writing, a sad Reproach it wou'd be to his infinite Wisdom and Justice, if he shou'd set forth a Book, containing his divine Will, and comprising

(a) Acts xx. 25.

(b) Matt. x. 20.

our

our eternal Interest, and yet suffer it to be so abstruse and mysterious, that Men, with all their Application, shou'd not be able to unriddle the Meaning of it, and then everlastinglly condemn them, for not practising those Rules, or believing those Doctrines, which were so obscurely laid down, that they cou'd not possibly understand them. But, as this is a Notion abhorrent to the Nature of God ; so it is no less repugnant to the true Character of his Scriptures : For (a) *thy Word*, says holy *David*, *is a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Path : The Way of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul, and his Testimony is sure, making wise the Simple* ; even as the Doctrine of the *New Testament* (according to *St. Paul*) (b) *by Manifestation of the Truth, recommends itself to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God* ; and therefore, *if our Gospel be hid*, says he, *it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this World has blinded the Eyes of them, that believe not ; lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ (who is the Image of God) shou'd shine unto them.*

The Truth is ; the holy Scriptures, Much which were design'd for the general Use plainer of Mankind, are, in all necessary Points Writings at least, much plainer, and easier to be of the Fathers.

(a) *Psalm cxix.*

(b) *2 Cor. iv. 2, &c.*

understood,

understood, than any human Compositions: and therefore it is unaccountable, why Appeals shou'd so frequently be made, for the Decision of any disputed Point, from the sacred Records, to the Writings of the *Ancients*; when, (a) considering the *Languages*, in which their Books were written, the peculiar *Idioms* and Phrases, which they use, the various *Figures* and Rhetorical Flourishes, the Terms of Art and Logical *Subtilties* and Distinctions, with which their Writings do abound, it must be allow'd, that the Scriptures themselves, generally speaking, are easier to be understood, than those primitive Writers, to which we are remitted; and yet such is the Folly and Infatuation of some among us, that (in the Language of the Prophet) (b) *they have committed two Evils, they have forsaken the Fountain of living Waters, and have hewed Cisterns, broken Cisterns, that can hold no Water.*

To sum up what has been said in Behalf of the Scripture. If Writing in general be the only Method of perpetuating Things to Posterity, and the Method that God himself made Choice of to declare his Will to Mankind, both in the Old and New Testament: If thus recording the Will of God was of excellent Use for the

And that,
upon the
Whole, a
Protes-
tant's Re-
ligion lies
in his
Bible.

(a) Ibbot's Boyle's Lect.

(b) Jer. ii. 13.

Preservation

Preservation of the Doctrines of Religion, and a sure Remedy against the Uncertainty and Corruptions of *Tradition*: If the *Canon* of this Scripture was transmitted to us, not by any *vagrant Report*, but by a much surer Hand; was ascertain'd at first by the Authority of an *Apostle*; acknowledg'd, all along, by succeeding *Christians*; and, without any remarkable Alteration, has so descended to us: and if this *Canon* of Scripture be sufficiently *perfect*, so as to need no Supplement from any other Quarter; and sufficiently *intelligible* in all Things necessary, so as to want no *infallible Interpreter*; then may we infer, That the holy Scripture is a compleat Rule both of Faith and Manners, or (as our (a) Church expresses it) containeth all Things necessary to *Salvation*, so that whatsoever is not read therein, or may be prov'd thereby, is not to be requir'd of any Man, that it shou'd be believ'd as an *Article of Faith*, or be thought *requisite*, or necessary to *Salvation*. And, for the Confirmation of all this, I might, in Imitation of our Author, run over a common Place of Testimonies from the Ancients, agreeing with *Lactantius*, in this Particular, viz. that (b) *nothing is fundamental in Religion, that is not attested by the Word of God*; but I

(a) Art. 6.

(b) Lib. 7. cap. 2.

E

chuse

chuse rather to conclude this Argument in the Words of our (a) excellent Mr. Chillingworth : “ The Bible, says he, “ the Bible only is the Religion of Pro-“ testants. Whatever else they believe, “ besides it, and the plain, irrefragable, “ indubitable Consequences of it, well “ may they hold as a Matter of *Opinion*; “ but, as Matter of *Faith* and Religion, “ neither can they, with Coherence to “ their own Grounds, believe it them-“ selves, nor require the Belief of it of “ others, without most high and most “ *Schismatical Presumption*. I, for my “ Part, after a long and (as I verily believe “ and hope) impartial search of the true “ Way to eternal Happiness, do profess, “ plainly, that I cannot find any Rest to “ the *Sole of my Foot*, but on this Rock “ only. I see plainly, and with mine own “ Eyes, that there are *Popes* against *Popes*, “ *Councils* against *Councils*, some Fathers “ against others, a *Consent* of Fathers of one “ Age against a *Consent* of Fathers of ano-“ ther Age, the Church of one Age against “ the Church of another Age. *Traditive In-*“ *terpretations* of *Scripture* are pretended, “ but none are to be found. No *Tradition*, “ but only of *Scripture*, can derive itself “ from the *Fountain*, but may be plainly “ prov’d, either to have been brought in,

(a) Ch. 6. P. 154.

“ in

“ in such an Age after Christ, or that in
“ such an Age it was not in. In a Word,
“ there is no sufficient Certainty but of
“ Scripture only, for any considerate Man
“ to build upon. This therefore, and this
“ only, I have Reason to believe.”

C H A P. IV.

Of CEREMONIES.

WE justly complain of the Church *The Pa-
of Rome*, that, by the Multitude <sup>pist ex-
ceeded by</sup> of her needless and trifling *Ceremonies*, <sup>the Cate-
chift on</sup> she has strangely disguis'd Christianity, and, ^{this} in a Manner, quite lost it in the *Trappings*, ^{Topicke.} and Accoutrements, wherewith she pret-
ends to adorn it: But our *Catechift* has
even transcended her in this Respect. She has
laid aside *Immersion* in Baptism in cold Cli-
mates; the *Mixture* of Wine, and *Infant-
Communion* in the *Eucharist*; *Praying to the
East*; *Love-Feasts*; the *Kiss of Charity*; the
Order of *Deaconesses*; and some other Things
of the like Nature: But this Writer is not on-
ly for retaining all these, as necessary Ingredi-
ents in the *Constitution of a well order'd
Church*, but earnestly contends likewise,
* *that all the Customs and Usages, which the* ^{* P. 219.}
*Original Mother Churches, from the Be-
ginning observ'd; all whose Establishment*

and Origin have not in any Place been discover'd; all, that the Fathers (those especially of the first Ages after the Apostles) have made Mention of, ought to be esteem'd and receiv'd as Apostolical, and whatever of this

* P. 195. Kind is Apostolical (* be it never so trivial or Ceremonial in our Opinion) it is not in the Power of any, nay, of the Universal Church, to alter or lay aside.

Ceremo-
nies, which judicious *Hooker*, (a) that, " in every
to be re-
ceiv'd and " great and publick Duty, which God
which re- " requireth at the Hands of his Church,
jected. " there is, besides that *Matter* and *Form*,
" wherein the *Essence* thereof consisteth,
" a certain outward *Fashion*, whereby the
" same is, in decent Sort, administer'd."

And he farther observes, that " no Nation
" under Heaven either doth, or ever did
" any publick Actions of Weight, whether
" they be *civil* and *temporal*, or else *spi-*
" *ritual* and *sacred*, without some visible
" *Solemnity*:" And therefore far am I
from disapproving *Solemnity* in the Wor-
ship of God, or from entertaining any
Prejudice against such *Rites* and *Usages*,
as are conducive to the Divine Honour, to
the *Beauty of Holiness*, or to the Edification
of Men's Souls. All, that I am willing to
oppose, are those only, that, either in the

(a) B. 4. P. 86.

Use

Use of them, are unlawful ; or, for the excessive Number of them, over-burthen-some ; or, for their *Insignificance*, trifling ; “ for Ceremonies destitute of Signification “ (says the same great Author) are no better than the idle Gestures of Men, whose “ broken Wits are not Masters of what “ they do.”

Under the Jewish Oeconomy we find God accounting Ordinances, even of his own Institution, trifling and useless, if not detestable, Ceremonies, unless they had something better to recommend them. All look'd upon as Things indifferent by God, by Christ.

(a) Bring no more Oblations, says he, *Incense is an Abomination to me*; the new Moons, and Sabbaths, the Calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with it; it is *Iniquity*, even your solemn Meeting: where it is plain, that these Ritual Observances were of no Avail, unless they were sanctified with good Dispositions in the Worshipper. A Place, appointed for the Service of God, is certainly a Matter of more Moment, than * *Turning our Faces to the East*, when we * P. 194. pray; or any other Rite, that our Catechist so warmly insists on; and yet (b) our Saviour, in his Answer to the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well, makes it of no great Significance, where-ever we offer up our Devotions, whether on Mount Geri-

(a) Isa. i. 12.

(b) John iv. 21, &c.

And his
Apostle St.
Paul.

zim, or in *Jerusalem*, so long as we worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

(a) *Peace, Order, Decency, and mutual Edification* are the great Ends that St. Paul propounds to the Church, in the Observation of all Ceremonies; and it is an Argument, that he look'd upon them, as Matters of an indifferent Nature, when he did not interpose his *Apostolick Authority*, but, so long as these Ends were attain'd, left every Church herein to its own Prudence and Determination. Had Ceremonies, in his Esteem, been Matters of more Consequence, and in any Sense *necessary to Salvation*, he certainly wou'd have given us some System of Rules and Directions, how, and in what Manner, each Office was to be administer'd, and so continu'd *invariably* unto the End of the World: But to leave the Christian Church *uninform'd*, and *uninstructed* in Matters of so great Importance (as this Writer wou'd gladly make all Sorts of Ceremonies) was far from expressing what, he pretended, (b) *came upon him daily*, as if it had been the grand Concern of his Life, *the Care of all the Churches*. The Apostle, we may observe, was not so scrupulous in this Regard, by the publick Declaration which he makes of his own Prac-

(a) Rom. xiv. 19. and 1 Cor. xiv. 40. (b) 2 Cor. xi. 28.

tice:

tice: (a) *I be free from all Men, yet have I made myself a Servant unto all, that I might gain the more.* To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law---To the Weak, became I as Weak, that I might gain the Weak. I am made all Things to all Men, that I might, by all Means, save some. Where it is apparent by the Apostle's Compliance, and Con-forming himself to the Customs and Fashions of so many different People, he look'd upon these Things, in quite another Light, than what our *Catechist* does, other-wise we had never found him (b) *circum-cising Timothy at Lystra, because of the Jews that were in those Quarters;* or (c) *purify-ing himself in the Temple of Jerusalem, because of the Jewish Converts in that City, who were all very zealous for the Law.*

That Part of the Law, which consisted in Rites and Ceremonies, he knew very well, was either quite *abolish'd*, or, at least, become *indifferent*, by the Coming of Christ, and the Publication of the Gof-pel; and therefore he made no Scruple, for the Promotion of the Cause that he had at Heart, to comply with such Cus-toms, as others might have in great *Vene-*

(a) 1 Cor. ix. 19, &c. (b) Acts xvi. 3. (c) Acts xxi. 21.

ration, but to him were no more than bare Ceremonies, either to be used, or rejected, accordingly as they serv'd the Purposes of his *Apostleship*. This justifies St. Paul in many Instances, and is a good Reason, why the other Jews, converted to Christianity, still continu'd to frequent the Temple and Synagogue Service, and to comply with many Observances, that they knew were become obsolete, until the Dissolution of the Jewish State put a *Period* to that Dispensation.

And therefore ought not to be imposed as necessary.

Now if Ceremonies, in themselves, both under the Jewish and Christian Dispensation, were look'd upon by God, by Christ, and his Apostles and Followers, as things, in their Nature, purely indifferent, it is certainly a manifest Encroachment upon that Liberty, *wherewith Christ has made us free*, to impose them upon us again, as necessary, and essential to the due Performance of any Religious Offices: and 'tis against this Encroachment, that St. Paul makes such Remonstrances, when he tells us (a) of *false Brethren, who came in privately, that they might spy out the Liberty, which he and other Christians had in Christ Jesus, to the Intent, that they might bring them into Bondage*; and therefore he cautions his *Galatians* against (b) the *Observation*

(a) Gal. ii. 4.

(b) Gal. iv. 9, 10.

Observation

ervation of Days, and Months, and Times and Years; and that they shou'd not turn again to such weak and beggarly Elements, nor desire any more (a) to be entangled with the Yoke of Bondage: and then concludes his Epistle with this Admonition; (b) *As many, as desire to make a fair Shew in the Flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised, only lest they shou'd suffer Persecution for the Cross of Christ: For neither they themselves, who are circumcised, keep the Law, but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your Flesh; but of this be well assur'd, that, in Jesus Christ, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a new Creature.*

There is this farther Consideration, that tho' they Ceremonies of no kind, tho' they pretend ^{were of} even to *Apostolick Institution*, ought to be ^{Apostolick} Institu- impos'd on us, as Matters of necessary ^{tion.} Obligation; because, in their own Nature, they are *mutable*, and, by the Authority of any Church, may either be alter'd, or disus'd. For the Opinion of the great *Hooker* is peremptory in this, * That * P. 123. " it may establish that Form and Order, " at one Time, which, at another Time, " it may abolish; and in both may do well". (c) In Matters that are merely ritual, the

(a) Gal. v. 1. (b) Gal. vi. 12, &c. (c) Burnet on Art. 20.

Because
even such
are muta-
ble.

State of Mankind, in different Climates and Ages, is apt to vary, and the same Things, that, in one Scene of human Nature, may look grave, and seem fit for any Society, may, in another Age, become improper, and a Means to misguide Men's Judgments, or dissipate their Thoughts. At the End of the *Paschal* Supper (as St. John informs us) our Lord not only (*a*) *washed his Disciples Feet, and wiped them with a Towel, wherewith he was girded*, but told them moreover, that the like Office was incumbent upon them; *for if I, your Lord and Master, have washed your Feet, ye also ought to wash one another's Feet*: But will any one say, that this Custom, between Superiors and Inferiors, ought to be continued, tho' no improper Indication of Humility and Condescension? St. Paul makes this Remark to the *Corinthians*; (*b*) *Doth not even Nature itself teach you, that, if a Man hath long Hair, it is a Shame to him?* And yet, among us, as well as other Nations, a long and well dress'd Head of Hair is far from being a *shameful* or unbecoming Sight. In
• P. 137. the Church of *Jerusalem* (which * this Writer holds to have been the most perfect that ever was upon the Earth) the

(*a*) John xiii. 5, 14.

(*b*) 1 Cor. xi. 14.

Custom

Custom was for (a) those, who had Possessions and Goods, to sell them, and to part them to such as had Need, so that all Men had all things in common; but, even in St. Paul's Time, this Custom was chang'd into an Admonition, to (b) the Rich, to be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; and to the Poor, (c) to do their own Business, and to work with their own Hands.

Immersion was certainly the ancient, and, in hot Countries, is still retain'd as the proper Rite in the Sacrament of *Baptism*; but, in *colder* Climates, it may endanger the Health of the tender Infant; and is therefore laid aside. And, tho' the *Kiss of Peace*, *Feasts of Love*, and an *Order of Deaconesses* were the Practices of the *Apostolick Age*; yet, when they came to give Occasion to Scandal, Raillery, and Intemperance, all the World (except our *Catechist*) was, and is still satisfied with the Reasons of letting them fall. Now if Churches may abrogate such Rites and Usages, as, by the Testimony of the Scriptures themselves, were observ'd in the Days of the Apostles, they doubtless have Power to alter, retrench, or quite abolish those that are of an *uncertain Origin*; that have no Foundation in holy *Writ*; are

(a) Acts ii. 44, 45.
(c) 1 Thess. iv. 11.

(b) 1 Tim. vi. 18.

needless

needless to be us'd, and ridiculous to behold; and, tho' perhaps innocent and pious at first, have been abus'd to *Superstition* and *Idolatry*, and swell'd up at last to such a *Bulk*, that they seem to oppress and stifle true Religion with their Number and Weight.

* P. 219.
And not
distin-
guishable
from
others.

But to all this our Author replies, * *That no Church whatever has any Right to change or reject those Customs or Usages, be they never so many in Number, never so trifling in Appearance, that the original Apostolick Mother Churches, or (as he has it in other Places) the Catbolick and universal Church bath thought fit to receive and establish.* But, while he talks at this wild Rate, and ascribes such high Birth to the Trifles, and Fopperies, he endeavours to recommend, he puts me in mind of those Ancient *Heathen Heroes*, whose Rise being *low* and *obscure*, or, more commonly, *base* and *spurious*, whenever they came to make a considerable Figure in the World, they grew ashame'd of their mean *Extract*, and rather than own their natural *Parent* (who perhaps was an *Hedger* and *Ditcher*, or something worse) wou'd needs fetch their *Pedigree* from *Heaven*, and make some *God* or other (whom they lik'd best) their *Mother's Paramour* and *Gallant*. The *Truth* is, whether the *Ceremonies*, which our Author insists on, be *genuine*, or *spurious*,

spurious, of *Apostolick* Origin, or foisted upon us as such, at this Distance of Time it is impossible for us to determine. The Scripture, we may perceive, says little or nothing of them, but leaves all the Offices of Religion to be administer'd in their primitive Simplicity, and according to the general Rules of Decency. The Writers that immediately succeeded the Apostles, such as *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Clement*, &c. were very sparing in giving any Rules or Directions concerning these Matters. The *Apostolick Constitutions* and *Canons*, which our *Catechist* crowds in among the Writings of the first Age, are full and express enough to this Purpose: (a) but then they can be of no great *Authority*; because they are *forg'd Pieces* under that fictitious Name, and did not appear, until the latter End of the *fourth*, or Beginning of the *fifth* Century. *Oral Tradition* (as we have seen) is a Way of Conveyance so precarious, that on it there can be no Dependance as to the Truth and Certainty of any Rule or Custom. *Synods* and *Councils* were not held before the Time, that Ceremonies, both true and false, had got some Footing, and, in different Churches, found themselves *Patrons* and *Abettors*: For it must be acknowledg'd, that, in all Con-

(a) Vid. *Daillee*, and *Cave's* Pref. to his *Prim. Christ.*

troverfies,

troverfies, which happen'd between the *Catholicks* and *Hereticks* of those Days, nothing was more common, on both Sides, than to fortify their respective Arguments with *original Apostolick Tradition* (as they lov'd to call it) or the universal Practice of the Church. In the Course of which *Management*, it frequently fo happened, that many a *boasted* Rite or Usage (like the *Pagan Heroes* we were just now speaking of) passed for an Institution of Christ and his Apostles, when it was, in Reality, no better than a *base-born Brat*.

* P. 219.
The Testi-
mony of
the Fa-
thers.

* “ But is not the Testimony of the Fathers, of those especially who lived near the Times of the Apostles, and convers'd with them, when they, in their Writings, make Mention of any Custom or Ceremony; is not their Testimony, I say, sufficient to make it Apostolical ? ” That we can by no Means allow: For, whatever Esteem and Veneration we may have for the Names and Writings of the *Ancients*; yet still we must consider them as Men, and, as such, liable to Errors and Mistakes, as well as we: And (a) if the Apostles themselves, before they were *inspir'd*, mistook our Saviour's Meaning in very plain and obvious Matters, Why might not these as

(a) Ibbot's Boyle's Lect.

well

well mistake the Apostles themselves? What Assurance or Security have we that they did not, especially if they were instructed by *verbal* Information only? And why then shou'd we receive their Opinions, or rely upon them any farther, than they are agreeable to Reason, or Scripture, or actually supported by them? Had we indeed a competent Number of Writers immediately after the Apostles, and a competent Number of their *undoubted* Writings, this might be of great Use to determine the Manner and Quality of the Religious Customs that then prevailed; but, since the few Writings, that we have remaining of those Times, do not professedly treat of these Matters, but whenever they mention any Thing relating to them (as sometimes they may) do it only *incidentally*, and in such a Manner, that we cannot from thence determine what their *positive* Opinion is, 'tis certain, that we cannot appeal to them, as proper *Judges*, because they are in a great Measure *silent* in these Points: But from their Silence we may infer, that such Ceremonies (as our Catechist mentions) were of no great Account in those early Times, because they are so seldom mention'd: And afterwards, when they came to be mention'd, we find the Writers, then, not only *contradicting* one another, but many Times contradicting

ing themselves; insomuch that it is very difficult to determine any Point with Certainty by their Authority; nor is it easy to gather from them, what was the general Practice of the Church, or what was their own private and settled Opinion concerning it. So small is the Probability, from the Writings of the Fathers, tho' never so *Ancient*, never so near the Times of the Apostles, of coming to the Knowledge of what the *Practice* of the Primitive Church was, in Relation to her Rites and Ceremonies.

And the
unknown
Origin of
any Cus-
tom of no
Affiance
to us here-
in.

But may not any *Practice*, whose *Origin* is so obscure, that we cannot discover the Beginning of it, in any Place or Time (even without the Testimony of the Fathers) pass for *Apostolical*? This is just as if we shou'd say; because we know not the precise *Aera*, when such a Man was born, he must therefore, of Necessity, be *contemporary* with *Adam*. 'Tis impossible for us to tell when such and such a *Rite* took *Place in the Church*: But this is an Argument that makes for *Error*, much more than it does for *Truth*. What our Saviour says of different Kinds of Men, is every whit as applicable to the Subject we are now upon: (a) *He, that doth Truth, cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be made*

(a) John iii. 20, 21.

manifest,

manifest, that they are wrought in God; but every one, that doth Evil, hateth the Light, nor cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds shou'd be reprov'd. Rites and Customs, that were *Apostolical*, appear'd from the very first. They manifested themselves all along, nor was there any Dispute concerning their *Legitimacy*: but such, as were *spurious*, hated the Light, and therefore (a) crept into the Church by Degrees, some in one Age, and some in another; according as Ignorance, or Superstition in the People, or Ambition or Interest in the Chief Governors thereof, administer'd Occasion or Opportunity to their Rise.

For it may be observ'd that (b) many, who brought in these Rites, and contended for their Use, were Persons of great *Power* in the Church, and were therefore protect-ed from publick *Censure*: That many, who were their principal Promoters, were Men of great *Esteem* in their Age, which made others desirous to follow their Exam-ples: That many of those Things, which ended in *Superstition*, were taken up at first out of a good Design, to win more *Proselytes* from the Heathen World: and That, as, in a few Ages, the Church did much alter from itself, this alter'd Men's

How *spu-*
rious Rites
might
creep into
the Church
unper-
cei-v'd.

(a) Tillotson's Rule of Faith.
Rat. Acct.

(b) Stillingfleet's

Apprehensions and Judgments of Things, as to their *Agreeableness and Necessity*. These and several other Reasons may be assign'd for the *Rise and Origin* of vain and superstitious Rites and Usages: But none can be given for such as were true and apostolical. They set out with Christianity at first. They always went along with it, as its proper Attendants and Hand-maids. They never absconded, or conceal'd their Author, but were held in great Esteem and Veneration; 'till, by the Accession of *Intruders*, the Number became excessive and scandalous.

And how the Number of them came to increase so excessively, we may chiefly impute to the Fraud and Malice of the Devil, (a) that *Enemy, who came, and sowed Tares among the Wheat, while Men slept.* He knew full well, that, if he cou'd but attach Mankind to these *outward Observances*, and once persuade them, that the *Perfection of Religion* consisted therein, he wou'd soon be able to destroy the *Power of Godliness* in their Souls; and therefore he struck in with their ruling Passions, the Folly and Levity of the *Vulgar*, who are always most taken with *Shew, and gaudy Appearances*, and with the Pride and Vanity of their *Rulers*, who affected (b) to be *Lords over God's Heritage*,

(a) Matt. xiii. 25.

(b) 1 Pet. v. 3.

and

and (a) to have *Dominion over their Faith* : and by these he took Occasion to *blind the Eyes of the Simple*, while he was turning their Religion into a mere *Farce*. *Christianity* was, at first, a plain and simple *Institution*, in which *Respect* it greatly differ'd from the *Law*. And, as (b) in all *Things*, whether of *Nature* or *Art*, there is a kind of easy solid *Plainness*, which far excels all the *Comeliness* of labour'd *Ornaments* ; so in Religion, its *Simplicity* was its chief *Beauty*, and its *Plainness* its only *Decoration*, 'till it came to be *disfigur'd* and disguised by human *Inventions*, and the *Accession* of *carnal Ordinances*.

About the *second Century* a pernicious Custom prevail'd in the Church, (c) of representing *Things*, recorded in the *Gospel*, in an *external symbolical Manner* : from whence arose the many Ceremonies, mention'd by our *Catechist*, relating to *Baptism*, and other sacred Offices, which were continu'd in succeeding Ages : and, as they advanc'd, they grew ; till, in the *fourth* and *fifth Centuries* Men's Thoughts and Contrivances ran wholly upon the *outward Part* of Religion, and how they might adorn and beautify that, in Hopes of making more Converts among the *Heathens*.

(a) 2 Cor. i. 24. (b) Bp. Sprat's Serm. (c) Stillingfleet's Rat. Acct.

The Heathens had all along complain'd of the *Nakedness* and Simplicity of the Christian Religion : and therefore (a) 'tis reasonable to think, that the *Emperors*, and other great Men, who were now become *Christians*, might, in a *political View*, considering the vast Strength of *Heathenism*, press the Bishops of those Times, to use all imaginable Ways to *adorn* Christianity with such an *external Form* of Worship, as might be most acceptable to them, and most probable to bring them over to it. And 'tis not unlikely, that the Rulers of the Church, in those Days, might be *flexible* enough to comply with the *secular Powers* in this their Demand, since it came attended with so plausible a Pretence : And, accordingly, we find, that, whereas the *primitive Christians* were reproach'd with their having no Temples, no Altars, no Sacrifices, or Priests, those, of these Ages, soon chang'd their *Dialect* in all these Points, and, out of a fond Compliance with the Heathens, (b) adopted several of their Rites, and so made Way for all that *Trumpery*, which the Church of *Rome* abounds with, and all the little *Gewgaws*, that our *Protestant Catechist* is so desirous to introduce.

(a) Burnet on Art. 20.
Letter from *Rome*.

(b) Vid. Dr. Middleton's

The short of the Matter is, that, by one Means or other, Religious Ceremonies, at this Time, were multiplied to such an excessive Degree, that St. Austin, as (a) our Church informs us, complain'd, that they were grown to such a Number, that the Estate of Christian People was in a worse Condition concerning that Matter, than were the Jews: and, as he counsels, that such a Yoke and Burden shou'd be taken away, whenever a proper Time shou'd come to do it in; so was it an *Act* highly commendable in our Church, which had so long labour'd under this *Superfætation* of Ceremonies, to unburthen herself of them, as she did. And many strong Reasons there are, why we shou'd reverence the Memory of our first *Reformers*, and speak of them with great Regard and Veneration, more especially upon this Account--- (b) That, in rectifying the Abuses, which had crept into the Church, they religiously observ'd the *golden Mean*; and, as they did not rashly throw aside every *Rite*, that they found establish'd and receiv'd, in the Age wherein they lived, but such only as were trifling and insignificant, had been perverted to bad Ends, and applied to superstitious Purposes; so they took Care to retain all

(a) In her Pref. to the Comm. Prayer. (b) Bp. Smalridge's Serm.

such as, in their *Nature*, were free from Blame, and, in their *Kind*, fitted and adapted for *Decency* and *Order*, the Edification of the People, and the Ornament of God's publick Worship: that so our *Protestant* Church, even in the Manner of her outward Administrations, might (a) become a glorious Church, not having Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing; but that it might be holy, and without Blemish.

C H A P. V.

Of SACRAMENTS.

Our Catechist surpasses the Papist in this Article, and differs a little from him.

* P. 224.

WE of the Church of *England* allow but of *two* Sacraments, as instituted in the Gospel, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*: (b) Those of the *Romish* Communion have added *five* more, viz. *Confirmation*, *Penance*, *extreme Unction*, *Orders*, and *Matrimony*: But our *Catechist* has thought proper to make these *five ten*, and given them the Name of *lesser Sacraments*. * Of these, some belong to *Baptism*, viz. *Exorcism*, *Anointing with Oil*, *the white Garment*, *a Taste of Milk and Honey*, and *the Unction of the Holy Chrism*; the other *five*, being us'd

(a) Eph. v. 27.

(b) Popish Creed, Art. 15.

upon

upon different Occasions, are the *Sign of the Cross, Imposition of Hands, the Unction of the Sick, holy Orders, and Matrimony*. Where we may observe, that, to vary a little from the Church of *Rome*, instead of *Confirmation*, this *Writer* introduces *Imposition of Hands*, which the *Papists* call the *outward Sign* of it; that; tho' he does not call *Penance* a *Sacrament*, yet he makes both that and *private Confession to the Priest* Duties of absolute Necessity to all *Christians*; and that, altho' most of his *lesser Sacraments* are in *Truth* nothing else, but so many *Popish Ceremonies*, now actually practis'd in that Church, yet these he declares to be so *essential*, so binding, * that * P. 195. *it is not in the Power of the Governors of any, nay not of the universal Church, to alter, or lay them aside.* So that upon the whole we may conclude, (d) that as *Peter Lombard*, in the *twelfth Century*, was the first that ever talk'd of *seven Sacraments*, and thereby made his Name known; so, to his immortal Praise, it may be recorded, that, about the Middle of the *Eighteenth Century*, there appeared a certain *Anonymous Writer*, who surmounted this heavy *Lombard* five *Bar-lengths*, and gallantly made them *twelve*: But, whether he had any Foundation for so doing, we may best per-

(a) *Burnet* on Art. 25.

ceive, by stating the true Meaning of a Sacrament in general: Thence shewing that *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* have a just Right to that Title; whereas the Multitude of his pretended Sacraments have none at all. And then observing, what *idle and trifling Ceremonies* he has adopted into the Administration of *Baptism*; and what *dangerous and unscriptural Doctrines* he has ingrafted into the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*.

The
Meaning
of the
Word Sa-
crament.

* P. 223.

(a) The Word *Sacrament*, which is of *Latin* Original, signifieth an Oath, or an Obligation expressed by an Oath, which is always esteemed a thing sacred. It is a Term never once mention'd in Scripture, nor has it any determinate Sense given it in the Word of God. In the Writings of the ancient Fathers it is used for almost every Thing under the *Old Testament* that bore any Similitude to Things under the *New*; and in the *New* for all the Articles peculiar to the Christian Faith; all the Duties of Religion, not discernible by Sense or natural Reason; and all the Rites and Practices of it, that had any secret or latent Meaning in them. And, from this loose and indefinite Signification of the Word, * our Author takes Occasion to apply it to such *trivial Matters* as least

(a) Bp. Hoadly's plain Account.

of

of all deserve that Name ; tho' he cou'd not but be sensible, that, in a short Time, it came to be restrain'd to its proper Meaning ; and cou'd not but know, that there is a wide Difference between a *Custom* or *Practice* set up by weak or designing Men, and a *real Sacrament* appointed by Christ himself.

(a) In the *Old Testament Circumcision* And a Description and *propitiatory Sacrifices* were, to the of its *Nature*. Jews, Things of a different Nature from all *Ritual Precepts*, concerning their *Purgations*, and the Distinction of their Meats, and Days, and Years. By *Circumcision* they received the *Seal of the Covenant*, and were brought under the Obligation of the *whole Law*, which when at any Time they had transgressed, by their *Sacrifices*, where-with Atonement was made, their Sins were done away, and themselves restor'd to God's Favour, which was more than all their other Observances cou'd do for them. And, in like Manner, the two Sacraments of the Christian Dispensation, *Baptism*, whereby we enter into Covenant with God, and the *Eucharist*, whereby we repair the Breaches and Transgressions of it, are widely different, and much superior to any Ceremonies that accompany their Administration. (b) What we mean there-

(a) Burnet on Art. 25.

(b) Burnet ibid.

fore,

fore, when we speak of Sacraments, is—
 “ That they are the constant Federal Rites
 “ of Christians, such as our blessed Lord,
 “ the Author and Mediator of the *new*
 “ *Covenant*, himself instituted, consisting
 “ of two Parts; an *outward*, which are
 “ the *visible Elements*, and an *inward*,
 “ which is the *Grace* of Pardon and For-
 “ giveness, signified and exhibited by
 “ these Elements; which Elements must
 “ be consecrated, and set apart for such
 “ Uses only, and according to such a *Form*
 “ of Words only, as Christ has thought
 “ proper to prescribe.”

That Baptism and the Lord's Supper have all the Requirements of one.

This seems to be a full *Description* of a Sacrament in general: and, accordingly, we may observe, that all the *constituent* and necessary Parts of such an Ordinance are to be found in *Baptism*. For here is the *Institution*, (a) *Go, preach, and baptize*; here the *Federal Sponson*, (b) the *Answer of a good Conscience*; here the *outward Part* or *Element, Water*; here the *inward Part*, or *Blessing convey'd*, *Baptism does now save us*; and here the *Form* of our Lord's own Appointment, (c) *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. And, in like Manner, we may say of the *Lord's Supper*: here is the *Institu-*

(a) Matt. xxviii. 19.
 (c) Matt. xxviii. 19.

(b) 1 Pet. iii. 21.

tion,

tion, (a) *Do this in Remembrance of me*; here the *Federal Act* on our Part, (b) *Ye shew forth the Lord's Death 'till he come*; here the *outward Part*, or *Bread and Wine*; here the *inward*, or *Conveyance* of the Blessing purchased by Christ's Death, (c) *the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*; and here the *Form* of Words of his own appointing, (d) *Take, eat, and drink ye all of it*: So that, in these two, we have all the proper Characters and Ingredients of a Sacrament; Institution, Matter, Form, Federal Acts, and Blessings convey'd. Let us now see, whether the same appear in the other *lesser Sacraments*, that our Catechist is so willing to introduce.

His *Exorcisms*, *Anointing with Oil*, *the white Garment*, *a Taste of Milk and Honey*, and *the Unction of the Holy Chrism*, I shall take Occasion to consider in the Light that they deserve, when I come to treat of the Sacrament of Baptism, whereof he makes all these the necessary Attendants: At present I shall only make some few Remarks, on *the Sign of the Cross*, *the Imposition of Hands*, *the Unction of the Sick*, *holy Orders*, and *Matrimony*; all which our Author endeavours to advance to the Dignity of Sacraments, tho' the Church of

(a) Luke xxii. 19. (b) 1 Cor. xi. 26. (c) 1 Cor. x. 17.
(d) Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.

Rome

Rome hath vouchsafed that Honour only to
the three last.

But that *The Sign of the Cross*, we allow, was a known Practice among the primitive Christians ; but then they were far from looking upon it as a *Sacrament*. They knew very well, that it was none of our Lord's Institution ; that it had no *outward Matter*, no *inward Grace*, no *Federal Acts*, no *Form* of appointed Words annexed to it ; and therefore they used it as a mere Ceremony ; and, by this Sign, did declare to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, among whom they lived, that they, by their Profession, were *Christians*, and, so far from being ashamed, that they *gloried in the Cross of Christ*, or the ignominious Death of their great *Founder*. Nay, even in the *Romish Church*, tho' they employ it in all their *publick Offices*, and very frequently in the Actions of *private Life*, yet their Superstition never went so far, as to raise it to the Rank and Order of a *Sacrament*. That was an *Act reserv'd* for the famous *Author* of the two *Catechisms*, and an *Improvement* in Religion, wherein he hath surpassed all that ever went before him. We indeed of the *Church of England* make Use of it, in the *Administration* of *Baptism* ; because in that *Sacrament* we enter into the *Service* of *Christ* ; make *publick Profession* of his *Religion* ; and, by this

this *Token*, declare to the World, that, be the *Event* what it will, we are resolv'd stedfastly to adhere to it. But we do not account it (as our Author may) a sure *Preservative* against the Malignity of Poisons or Fascinations, or of Efficacy enough to drive away Devils every where before it; and therefore we do not make Use of it as a *Charm*, nor mark our Foreheads with it upon every Occasion. He, by conversing with the Ancients, may be persuaded perhaps, that *this Sign alone was able * to vanquish Demons, silence the Heathen Oracles, hinder the Success of their Sacrifices and Magick Enchantments, confound their Soothsayers, and, in short, put all Paganism to Silence*. But our first Reformers had no such Notion of its Wonder-working Power in their Time; and therefore they secluded it, both from private Life, and publick Administrations, where it was ridiculous and *despicable*; and retain'd it only in the Office of Baptism, where it was pertinent and *venerable*.

Imposition of Hands is what the *Romanists* account the *outward Sign of Confirmation*; but it was never reckon'd a Sacrament itself, 'till our Catechist (in order to disguise himself a little) thought proper to give it that Transmutation. (a) *The*

(a) *Heb. vi. 2.*

Laying

* P. 418.

Laying on of Hands is said by the Apostle to be *one of the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*: and a Custom it was, even in ancient Times, to *bless* and *pray* for others, as well as confer the *Gifts* and *Graces* of the *Spirit*, in the *Use* of this *Ceremony*; but, then, this *Ceremony* is no more than the *Designation* of the Person, thus *bless'd* and *prayed* for. It is no more than a *Gesture* in *Prayer*, which only denotes our *Confining* our *Desires* to the *Party*, whom, in this *Manner*, we are presenting unto *God*. It is indeed an ancient, and almost a *natural* *Ceremony*, recommended by the *Example* both of *Christ* and his *Apostles*: but still here is no express *Institution* concerning it, no *Rule* given to practise it, no *outward Matter*, no *Federal Acts* annex'd to it: and therefore, tho' we do admit it as an *Apostolick Rite* and *Custom* in the *Offices* of *Confirmation* and *Ordination*; yet we can by no *Means* look upon it as a *proper Sacrament*.

*The Uncti-
on of the
Sick.* *Unction of the Sick* (as it is now practis'd by the *Church of Rome*) was never once mention'd, 'till after the Beginning of the *fifth Century*; and can therefore have no Right to be accounted a *Sacrament*. It has indeed this *Foundation* in *Scripture*----

(a) *Is any Sick, let him call for the Elders*

(a) *James v. 14.*

of

of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with Oil in the Name of the Lord; and the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. But, to come to the Sense of these Words; we must observe, That, among the Prophets of old, it was customary to use *Symbolical Acts*, when they went about working any Miracles; That (a) Moses, upon this Occasion used his Rod frequently, even (b) as *Elisha* did *Elijah*'s Mantle; That our Saviour, with this Purpose, (c) put his Fingers into the *deaf* Man's Ears, and (d) made *Clay* for the *blind* Man's Eyes: And therefore, as Oil was us'd almost in every thing in the *Eastern* Countries, the Apostles and first Christians made *that* the common *Symbol* (tho' sometimes they recover'd Men without it) in the miraculous Cures, which they, by an *inward Impulse* from above, were mov'd and excited to perform. For, among the many *extraordinary* Gifts, which were vouchsafed at this Time to the Rulers and Elders of the Churches, we read particularly of (e) *the Gift of Faith*, by which we are to understand a *strong* and *undoubted* Persuasion, that God would enable them to do what

(a) Exod. iv. 17, 20.

(b) 2 Kings ii. 8, 14.

(c) Matt. vii. 33.

(d) John ix. 6.

(e) 2 Cor. xii. 9.

he had so powerfully put in their Minds.
 (a) This was the *Faith of Miracles*, able to remove Mountains, (b) as our Saviour describes it. And from hence we may perceive, what the Meaning is of the *Prayer of Faith, and Anointing with Oil*, which St. James prescribes, viz. " That, if the " Elders of the Church, who were the " proper *Visitors* of the Sick, felt an in- " ward *Impulse*, moving them to call upon " God, in order to a miraculous Cure of " a Person under any Malady, first they " were to anoint him with Oil in the Name " of the Lord, i. e. by the Authority, " which they had receiv'd from Christ, " (c) to heal all Manner of Diseases; and " then they were to pray over him, sted- " fastly believing, that God wou'd make " good that inward *Motion*, which he had " given them to work this Miracle: and, " in that Case, the Effect wou'd certain- " ly be, that God wou'd raise the Man, " that was thus anointed, from his Bed " of Sickness." This seems to be a fair Construction of St. James's Words: For to make them denote a *common* Method of Cure, to be continued, to the End of the World, by a *standing* Order of Men in the Church (as * our Catechist contends) may

* P. 422.

(a) Whitby's Annot. in Locum. (b) Matth. xxi. 21.
 (c) Matt. x. 1.

be

be a Means to raise Men's Esteem of the Priesthood, but an Office that the Priest himself (if he has any Modesty) will never lay Claim to ; because he sees plainly, that no Man, now a-days, pretends to anoint the Sick for the Recovery of their Health (that Practice our Author has all to himself) being very conscious, that the miraculous Power of healing (to which this Ceremony did once minister) has long since departed from the Christian Church.

Ordination, or the Calling, and separating Persons for the Work of the Ministry Ordination.
by the Imposition of Hands and Prayer, we grant, is an Institution of Christ ; and, as such, we continue it in our Church, in the same Form and Manner that he and his Apostles settled in all Churches ; but still we cannot admit it as a Sacrament, because it wants *an outward and visible Sign.* For Imposition of Hands (as we took Notice before) is only a common *Gesture* in Prayer : and tho' we do not doubt, (a) but that the Grace of God accompanies this Ordinance, and the Prayers that are then offer'd up ; yet the Grace, that is therein conferr'd, is not *common* to all Christians, nor, in Consequence, any Part of the *Federal Right* purchas'd by our Saviour for us, but only the Blessing of God upon a

(a) Wake in the Catech.

G

particular

*particular Employ, and given to *particular Persons*, rather for the Benefit of *others*, than for the Furtherance of their own Salvation.*

And Ma-
trimony
have them
not.

Matrimony, we allow again, is an *Or-
dinance of God*, and, as it was first insti-
tuted in a State of *Innocence*, so is it still
founded in the Law of *Nature*: but ne-
vertheless, we cannot call it a *Sacrament*;
because we find no *Federal Acts* or Effects
assign'd to it in the *Gospel*. It wants an
outward Sign, to which, by Christ's Pro-
mise, a *Blessing* is annex'd. It neither
confers any *Grace*, where it is not; nor in-
creases it, where it is: and so far is it from
being peculiarly *Christian*, or *generally ne-
cessary to Salvation* (as we suppose all true
Sacraments ought to be) that it is common
to *Heathens* of all Nations, forbidden to
the Clergy of the *Church of Rome*. And those,
who make Vows against it, and renounce what,
in their own Opinion, is a
Sacrament, are (in our Author's Judg-
ment) more perfect and excellent *Christians*

* P. 433. for so doing; for, * *tho' Marriage, like
Silver, be good, says he, yet Continency,
like Gold, is better.*

And are
therefore
to be de-
graded
from be-
ing Sacra-
ments.

Thus it appears, upon what Accounts
we reject the pretended Sacraments, which
our *Catechist*, as well as the *Romanists* wou'd
obtrude upon us; namely, because we
think, that a large Difference ought to be
made

made between a *Custom*, begun and continu'd in the Church, and a *Sacrament* appointed by Christ himself, for the Conveyance of Grace, and the Promotion of Man's Salvation: That (a) the Rites and Modes hitherto examin'd, which this Writer wou'd pass upon us, as *Sacramental* Ordinances, are found to be destitute, some of *all*, and all of *some* of those *Characters* and *Properties*, that are apparent in the two which we retain; and that therefore we cannot admit of any more, under the Notion of Sacraments, without great Indignity done to the *Authority* of Christ, and a manifest Wrong to his sacred Religion, by (b) *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.*

Baptism, as it was instituted by our Lord, *Baptism*, and administer'd by his Apostles, is a ^{in its first} simple and easy Ordinance, deliver'd in ^{Institu-} a few Words, and not encumber'd with ^{plain and} many Ceremonies. (c) *Go ye, and teach* ^{simple Or-} *all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of* ^{dinance,} *the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy* ^{but made} *Ghost:* This is the *Form* of its Institution. ^{by the Ca-} And who wou'd ever have thought, that, ^{techist} out of such plain Directions, any Mortal ^{obscure and} wou'd have been able to extract such a ^{ridiculous.} parcel of idle *Fopperies*, as these? --- * That * P. 227;

(a) Wake in the Catech.
(c) Matt. xxviii. 19.

(b) Matt. xv. 9.

the Person, to be baptiz'd, must, in the first Place, be exorcis'd by the Priest's blowing thrice upon his Face, signing him with the Sign of the Cross, and pronouncing a certain Form of Authoritative Words, commanding

* P. 228. the Devil to depart out of him : * That he must next make a solemn Renunciation of the Devil, and a Vow of perpetual Obedience to Christ : In making his Renunciation, turning his Face to the West, as being opposite to the Origin of Light, and representing the Prince of Darkness, whom he renounces; but, in making his Vow, turning again to the East, where Paradise was planted, which is now laid open to him, with Hands and Eyes lift up to Heaven, as ready to embrace Christ, with whom he is now entering into Covenant : That, having gone through these Exercises regularly, he must then be anointed on the Head and Shoulders with holy Oil, consecrated for that Purpose by the Bishop, to enable him (as being now become the Champion of Christ) to wrestle more successfully with his Adversary, the Devil; and so plung'd three Times into Water, once at the Name of each Person of the blessed Trinity, to represent both the Profession of that Faith, into which he is baptiz'd, and also the three Days Burial of Christ, and his Resurrection on the third Day : That, after all this is done with him, he must, as soon + P. 232. as he comes out of the Water, + be cloathed.

cloathed with a white Garment, as having devoted himself to a Life of unspotted Purity; then receive the Kiss of Peace, in Token of his Incorporation into the Church; and, lastly, be made to taste of consecrated Milk and Honey, to denote his spiritual Infancy, and late Adoption into God's Family; for sweet Milk is the Nourishment of new-born Babes.

What an odd Mixture of idle and extravagant Conceits is here? And how must it provoke, either the Laughter, or Indignation of any Stander-by, to see a Sett of grave and serious Persons acting over all this *Farce*, this Dumb-shew of senseless *Fopperies*, even while they are initiating others into the Profession of a Religion, whose great Character and Commendation is *Simplicity, and a godly Sincerity*, void of all Pomp and Dissimulation? Did the Apostles, think we, execute the Commission, they receiv'd from their Master, in this wild and *ludicrous* Manner? I trow not. When St. Peter had converted *Cornelius*, and his Friends, insomuch that, while he was preaching, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word; Can any Man, says the Apostle, forbid Water, that that these Men shou'd not be baptiz'd, who have receiv'd the Holy Ghost, as well as we?

“ Yes, that can I (might a pert Fellow in the Company say) because, tho' God

This re-
presented
in two
Scripture
Instances.

“ has declared his Acceptance of them,
“ they are not yet *methodically* prepar’d
“ for Baptism. They have not, as yet,
“ been admitted to the Order of Cate-

* P. 226. “ *chumens*, * which must always be done
“ by Prayer, and *Imposition of Hands* at-
“ tended with the *Sign of the Cross*: They
“ have not undergone the *Fire of Exor-*

† P. 227. “ *cism*, so called by the Ancients, † be-
“ cause, as mix’d Metals are purged by
“ Fire, so does *Exorcism* purge the Soul,
“ and, as it were, fire the evil Spirit from
“ it, by casting a *Terror* upon him, making
“ him flee from his *Possession*, and leave it
“ in a *salutary State and Hope of eternal*

|| P. 228. “ *Life*: They have not perform’d || their
“ *Renunciation of the Devil*, with their
“ *Faces looking towards the West*, which
“ symbolically represents the *Prince of Dark-
ness*; nor their *Association with Christ*,
“ with their *Faces turn’d toward the East*,
“ the *Place of Light*, and an *Emblem of*
“ the *Sun of Righteousness*: Together with
“ several other Ceremonies, too many to be
“ nam’d, but all necessary to be perform’d,
“ before they can be qualified for the Re-
“ ception of *Baptism*.”

When (a) St. *Philip*, on the Road, had
converted the *Ethiopian Eunuch*, and they,
travelling along, came to a certain Water;

(a) *Acts viii. 26—36.*

See

See here is Water, says the Eunuch, what hindereth me to be baptiz'd? Much, very much might Philip reply (had he imbib'd our Catechist's Notions) I have none of * "the Holy Oil, wherewith your • P. 229.

" Head and Shoulders must be anointed,
 " thereby to signify that, by Baptism, you
 " are cut off from the wild Olive, ingrafted
 " into Christ, the true Olive-tree, and made
 " Partaker of his Fruits and Benefits; and
 " to this Purpose common Oil will not
 " do; it must be consecrated, or † clear'd + P. 230.
 " from that Impurity, with which, since the
 " Disobedience of our first Parents, all the
 " Parts of the created World are defil'd: It
 " must be done by an Apostle too; for || to || P. 239.
 " to make and consecrate this holy Unguent is
 " a Privilege, that belongs to the Bishops
 " and Guides of the Church; whereas I,
 " who am but an inferior Deacon, have
 " no Power or Authority to do it. But,
 " if that Difficulty cou'd be got over, † the ‡ P. 232.
 " consecrated Milk and Honey, that lively
 " Image and Figure of Canaan, is wanting;
 " nor have you, I fear, provided yourself
 " with a white Garment, and what shall we
 " do for that? Without it all the Beauty
 " and Validity of the Ordinance is spoil'd;
 " for it denotes § your putting off the Lusts § P. 232.
 " of the Flesh, your being clean from the
 " Filth and Defilement of your former Sins,
 " and your entering upon a solemn Engage-

" *ment to live in all Purity and Holiness for
 the Time to come.* This makes it an In-
 strument so necessary, that there's no
 Proceeding to the Sacrament without it;
 and therefore, since we are both of us so
 badly prepar'd, you to *receive*, and I to
 administer this sacred Rite, (a) *go your Way
 for this Time, when I have a more conve-
 nient Season, I will baptize you.*"

Far am I from treating any Office of Religion with Scorn and Contempt. Every thing in it, that portends Seriousness, or any Way relates to the Service of Almighty God, I revere and venerate. But when such sorry Trifles, as these, are set off with such an Air of Grandeur and Solemnity; when they are represented as essential Parts of Christianity, necessary in every Act of divine Worship, and of such eternal Obligation, that no Power upon Earth can *either alter, or lay them aside*, this is not only exposing Religion to the Jests and Derision of the Wicked and Profane, by dressing it up in a *Fool's-Coat*; but looks, as if the Man, out of an high Conceit of his own Parts and Abilities, was minded to put the Banter upon us, and to have the Pleasure of laughing at our Weakness, and easy Credulity; which is so gross an Insult upon human Understanding, that

(a) *Acts xxiv. 25.*

it

it may well deserve some Severity in our Resentment: and therefore I thought it not improper (a) to answer a Fool according to his Folly, lest he be wise in his own Conceit.

The Apology, which this Writer will be apt to make for himself upon this Occasion, I am sensible is this---“ That these trifling Rites (*as we call them*) he found dispers'd in the Writings of the Fathers, from whence he collected them; that these Fathers affirm them to be *Apostolick Traditions*, and constant Attendants on the Office of Baptism; and that, whatever these holy Men call an Apostolick Tradition, ought to be *observ'd and esteem'd as such.*” But if he really has so high a Veneration for the Fathers, and the Authority of their Writings, it had been more prudent, and more charitable in him, to have drawn a kind Veil over such *Blemishes*, and Singularities in them, as wou'd not well bear the Light. *Early in the Church* (as I hinted before) a Custom prevailed of representing the Mysterious of Religion by *external Symbols*; and, whether the Fathers were given to such *Devices*, or no, 'tis certain, that most of them had *Fancies* fruitful enough to have invented all the *Baptismal Ceremonies* an *obvious Invention.*

(a) *Prov. xxvi. 5.*

m onies,

monies, that our *Catechist* relates, had they been minded to set about it. 'Twas but considering Baptism in its several *Aspects*, and then applying something in Nature resemblant to each, and the thing was done. By Nature (for Instance) we are said to be the *Children of the Devil*; by Baptism to be made the *Children of God*. and, as it is proper, that one *Possessor* shou'd be ejected, before another takes Place, hence might arise the Custom of *Exorcising* the Devil, before the Form of Baptism did begin. By Baptism each Person was *enlisted* under Christ's Banner, (a) to *wrestle*, not only *against Flesh and Blood*, but *against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of Darkness of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places*; and therefore a short Reflection upon the Use of *Anointing* Combatants, in the solemn *Games*, might be enough to

* P. 229. suggest * *the strengthening Preparation of Unction with consecrated Oil*. By Baptism (which is therefore called (b) *the Washing of Regeneration*) we are clear'd from the Filth of Sin, and devoted to a Life of Purity; and, as an Emblem of this Change in us, an ordinary Fancy might devise the *putting on a white Garment*, the Moment the Office was ended. By Baptism the

(a) Eph. vi. 12.

(b) Tit. iii. 5.

Person

Person was receiv'd into the Society of Christians, or the Communion of the *Catholick Church*, and, to bid him *welcome* upon his new Admission, might be thought no more than proper and decent; and hence *the Kiss of Peace* might not unlikely have its Origin. And lastly, as the *Benefits* of this Admission might very naturally bring to Remembrance the promis'd Land, *the Land of Canaan, flowing with Milk and Honey*; a Taste therefore of this *Milk and Honey*, to be given to the new-baptiz'd Person, was an obvious Thought; and yet a lively Representation of the Privileges imparted in that Sacrament. In this Manner all the little Practices, which our Catechist wou'd have introduc'd, might have been invented by any common Dealer in *Emblems* and *Similitudes*; and 'tis a shrewd Sign, that they, who knew to give us the Reasons of them so exactly, might have no small Hand in the Invention of them; and then, their Inventor being a Person of some Authority in the Church (upon the Account either of their Pertinence or Prettiness) he might prevail for their Reception into the publick Service, under Pretence, likewise, of helping the *Imagination*, while the Sacrament was administering. And in this very Method, I verily believe, several Usages in the Church sprung up, without the least

Privity

Privity or Knowledge, either of the Apostles or Apostolick Men. So true is that Observation of (a) *Regallius*---- “ That Tradition wou’d be of some Avail, if nothing were deliver’d by our Ancestors, but what they had from the Apostles ; but, under the Pretence of our Ancestors, silly and counterfeit Things may, by Fools and Knaves, be deliver’d for Apostolick Traditions.”

And his
*Trine Im-
mersion*
particular-
ly consi-
der’d.

* P. 231.

In all the long String of Ceremonies, which this Writer annexes to the Office of Baptism, there is only one thing that deserves a sober Answer, viz. the *Manner of administering it*, which, according to him, must be * by *Trine Immersion*, or *plunging the Person under Water three Times, at the distinct Naming of each Person of the blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. That the Mention of the three divine Persons, in this holy Ordinance, is certainly necessary, cannot be denied ; because the *Form* of its first Institution runs in that Manner : but then we must observe, that the *Custom of dipping three Times* is neither commanded by Christ, nor recommended by any *Scripture Examples*, (b) but was taken up purely to obviate the *Heretical Opinions* of some, who, in the Infancy of

(a) Obser. in Cyprian.
Disc. vol. 2.

(b) Newcomb’s Cat.

the

the Church, began to oppose the Doctrine of the *Trinity* : and is therefore neither universally obliging, nor, in any Degree, preferable to *single* Immersion ; which, in an Office, where the three Persons are expressly nam'd, seems equally requisite, to declare, at the same Time, the *Unity* of the Godhead, or that *these three Persons are one God*.

(a) In *hot* Countries indeed Baptism was most commonly perform'd by *dipping*. This was the Way that the *Jews* receiv'd *Proselytes* into their Religion ; and 'tis not unlikely, that, from their Practice, our Saviour might take Occasion to institute this Sacrament : But then we must take Notice, (b) that, as the *Etymology* of the Word *baptize* denotes *Washing* in general, without specifying any particular Form of it ; so our Saviour thought proper to leave it in that unlimited Sense, thereby to accommodate it to all Ages, Conditions, and Climates. (c) For, when we read of *Thousands* that were baptiz'd in one Day at *Jerusalem* ; and of many (d) in private Houses, where it wou'd have been difficult to have gotten Water enough, and endless to have dipped them all (besides the allow'd Practice of baptizing some,

(a) Wake's Principles. (b) Wall on Inf. Baptism.
(c) Acts ii. 41. (d) Ch. x. 27, 28.

while

P. 231. while they lay on their Bed of Sickness) we cannot but conclude, that the Manner of administering this Sacrament was, from the very first, by *Sprinkling*, as well as *dipping*. * Our Catechist indeed puts us in Mind of St. Paul's frequent (a) *Allusions* to the Custom of *Dipping*: But, if the Intent of the Ceremony (whether performed by *Dipping* or *Sprinkling*) be to represent Christ's *Burial* and *Resurrection*, and, under these, our *Death unto Sin*, and *Rising again to Newness of Life*; as this may be done by *Affusion* of Water, as well as *Immersion* under it, there is no Doubt to be made, but that either Way the Apostle's *Allusions* may be sufficiently answer'd: but then, as the Gift of the Holy Spirit (which is the *principal* Thing signified by *Baptism*) is frequently describ'd, (b) in Scripture Language, by *sprinkling*, or *pouring on Water*; as our being purg'd from the Guilt of Sin (which is the *principal End* of *Baptism*) is represented most appositely by *Sprinkling*; and, as *Sprinkling* was an ancient Mode of Purification from all *legal* Pollutions among the *Jews*, and is a fair *Allusion* to (c) *that Sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus*, (d) *which cleanses us from all Sin*, 'tis certain, that this Form of

(a) Rom. vi. 3, and Col. iii. 12. (b) Isa. xliv. 3, and Ezek. xxxvi. 25. (c) 1 Pet. i. 2. (d) 1 John i. 7.

Administration has rather more *significance* and Propriety in it, than the other: but our Church, in her *Rubrick*, hath prescribed both. And so we proceed to the other *great Sacrament*, as * our Catechist * P. 224. calls it, *viz.* that of the *Lord's Supper*; and to observe, withal, what *dangerous* and *unscriptural* Doctrines he has ingrafted upon it.

We acknowledge indeed, that (a) some ^{The An-} of the Fathers, especially towards the Con-^{cients} clusion of the *fourth Century*, seem to ^{Opinion of} the Lord's have entertain'd an excessive Veneration ^{Supper.} for this Sacrament, and to give their Fancies a great Scope in the Commenda-
tion of it. They call'd it *a tremendous Mystery, a dreadful Solemnity, and a mystick Table, whose very Utensils are sacred, and ought to be worshipped, &c.* But, nevertheless, they maintained, that the Bread and Wine, even after Consecration, (b) did still retain their proper Nature and Substance: That the Body of Christ, in the Sacrament, was not his *natural* Body, not that Body which was crucified, nor that Blood which was shed upon the Cross, but only the *Sign* and *Figure* of it; and that it was impious to understand the *Eating of the Flesh of the Son of Man*, and

(a) Burnet on the Art.
Transubstantiation.

(b) Tillotson against

Drinking

Drinking his Blood, in a literal Sense ; as appears from a Multitude of Testimonies from the ancient Fathers, which (a) the above cited Authors have produc'd. And in this State the Doctrine of the *Eucharist* continued, 'till all Christendom, being overrun with Barbarity and Ignorance, became every Age more susceptible of Forgeries ; and then was the Notion of the Corporeal Presence, as it suited to the Credulity and Superstition of the Times, introduc'd, and at length establish'd in the Church of *Rome*, whose avowed Doctrine is this-- (b) “ That the Body and Blood, “ together with the Soul and Divinity of “ our Lord Jesus Christ, is truly and really “ in the most holy Sacrament of the Lord's “ Supper : That in that Sacrament there “ is a *substantial* Change made of the Ele-“ ments of Bread and Wine, into the na-“ tural Body and Blood of Christ : That “ Christ, being thus present under the “ Similitude of Bread and Wine, (c) is to “ be worshipped, to be carried about in “ Processions, and set forth before the “ People in order to be ador'd ; and that, “ in the Service of the *Mass*, there is of-“ fer'd a true, proper, and propitiatory Sa-“ crifice both for the *Living* and the *Dead*.

(a) Burnet, p. 328, and Tillotson, p. 233. (b) Popish Creed, Art. 17. (c) Concil Trident. Sess. 13. Can. 6.

The Pa-
pist's and
Catechist's
Notions
concern-
ing it.

Our *Catechist* was aware what a manifest Advantage the hard Word *Transubstantiation*, when it came to be canvas'd, gave the Adversaries of *Rome* in their Disputations with her; and therefore he takes Care to wave that, and endeavours, in some Measure, to mollify the Doctrine: but still he declares * *That, even before his Crucifixion, Christ thought proper to enter upon his Priestly Function, and, at his first Institution of the Eucharist, when he said, This is my Body, (‡ without any other Words to qualify the Signification of the Expression) under the Pledges of Bread and Wine he offer'd himself a Sacrifice unto God: That, || when he pronounc'd these Words, Do, or offer this in Remembrance of me, he gave his Apostles, and in them their Successors, full Power and Authority to act, as Priests, in the Sacrifice he was then instituting, and to continue the Use of it, even to the End of the World: That, whenever the Priest officiates in the Oblation of this Sacrifice, § God causes the holy Spirit, by his Influence and Operation, to make it the very Body and Blood of Christ, in real Power and Energy, and as far as it is possible for any thing to be made another, without changing the Substance: That this Sacrifice Christ all along intended shou'd be a standing Propitiation*

H

§ P. 296.

* P. 266.

† P. 257.

‡ P. 297.

- * P. 272. *pitiation for Transgressions*; * a real and
- + P. 267. *proper Sacrifice*, which, by its + purgative and expiatory Nature, procures Absolution for the Living in all Ages, and, when offer'd for the Faithful departed, becomes
- ‡ P. 341. available ‡ for the Repose of their Souls and the Remission of their Sins: And that,
- ¶ P. 272. tho' || the Merits of the great Sacrifice offer'd by Christ are indeed sufficient, abundantly sufficient for all this; yet these Merits cou'd not be actually applied to Men, that liv'd in after Ages, by Christ, when he solemniz'd the Sacrifice of our Redemption. He cou'd die but once, and therefore cou'd be sacrific'd but once in his own Person: and, for this Reason, he appointed the Representative Symbols for a constant Sacrifice in Remembrance of him. And, as it is a Sacrifice of such singular Efficacy both to the Living
- § P. 371. and the Dead, § it was usual, in the ancient Times of the Church, for Christians to reserve some Part of the consecrated Elements, and either to carry them Home for their own Use, or to send them to such as were absent, as justly apprehending, that, by Virtue of our Lord's Institution, they might be profitable to such as heard nothing of the Eucharistick Office.

And the great Abstruseness of the latter.

This is the Substance of our Author's Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or rather the Sacrifice of the Mass

Mass, the Duty and Necessity of *Infant Communion*, and the *Agapæ* or Love-Feasts, which this Writer labours to revive, fall not under the Class of *Popish* Tenets; because, at present, they are disus'd by that Church:) and about this he has employ'd an *hundred and fifty Pages*, tho' our Saviour deliver'd it in the Compass of *two or three Verses*: whereby he gives us to understand, that he, and the Author of this Sacrament, had quite different Sentiments about the Matter; that what was plain and obvious at first, he has made a perplex'd and intricate Thing; and that " therefore an Institution (as one (a) observes) which cannot be explain'd without so much learned Labour, nor believ'd without much Pains and Difficulty, cou'd * P. 311. never be design'd for * the most excellent Part of a Worship, which was calculated for the common Salvation of all Men."

When Christ, the eternal Son of God, undertook, with his heavenly Father, to become the great and *only Mediator* between God and Man, (b) he thereupon oblig'd himself to perform the *three Offices* of *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*. A *Prophet* he was to be, that he might make a perfect Revelation of God's Will to Mankind,

The Order of Christ's Mediatorial Offices.

(a) Middleton in his Pref. to his Remarks. (b) Scot's Mediator.

whereof they were most deplorably ignorant: A *Priest*, to make Atonement to the divine Justice for our manifold Transgressions of his Laws: And a *King*, to exact our Obedience, and both to reward the Faithful, and punish the Refractory in God's Service. But now, in the Execution of these Offices, there was this Order and Method to be observ'd. *First*, he was to enter upon his *Prophetick Office*, and declare God's Will to the World; *next* he was to proceed to his *Sacerdotal Function*, or to make *Expiation* for the Sins of Mankind by the Sacrifice of himself; and *then*, in Reward of his Obedience, he was to be exalted to his *Royal Dignity*, (a) and reign at the *Right Hand of the Throne of God*. And in this Method he proceeded. He *first prophesied*, or preach'd the Gospel to the World, which he did in the Course of his *Ministry*, and while he was alive: *Then* he made *Expiation* for our Sins; which he did at his Death, and upon the *Altar of his Cross*: And, *lastly*, upon his *Ascension* into Heaven, he receiv'd that *Regal Authority*, by which he is to reign until the *Consummation of all Things*: For (b) this *Man*, says the Author to the *Hebrews*, after he had offer'd one *Sacrifice* for Sins, for ever sat down on the *Right Hand*

(a) Heb. xii. 2.

(b) Heb. x. 12, 14.

of

of God; having, by one Offering, perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And, (a) if by this one Oblation once for all Christ hath perfected, or compleatly expiated, the Sins of them that are sanctified through *Faith in his Blood*, how come we to hear so much of *Eucharistick* and *unbloody* Sacrifices, which are to be repeated every Day? Unless we are to suppose (as * the * P. 272. *Catechist* seems to do) that what he offer'd upon the Cross, was *defective* in some Respect, and not of Efficacy sufficient to atone for all succeeding Generations. But now, since the Scriptures do every where teach us, that, (b) once in the *End of the World*, *Christ appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself*: That this Sacrifice was offer'd unto God in the Time of his Crucifixion, (c) when (as the Apostle expresses) he reconciled us to his Father by the Cross, and in the Body of his Flesh through Death: That this Sacrifice was never to be offer'd, but once, (d) once for all (as the Epistle to the *Hebrews* words it;) and therefore, when he had by himself purged our Sins, he sat down at the Right Hand of the Majesty on high: And that by his precious Blood, (e) as a *Lamb without Spot, and without Blemish*, (f) offer'd

(a) Whitby in *Locum*. (b) *Heb. ix. 26.* (c) *Eph. ii. 16.* and *Col. i. 22.* (d) *Heb. i. 3.* (e) *1 Pet. i. 19.*
(f) *Heb. ix. 14.*

through the eternal Spirit, we have received (a) *Redemption, even the Forgivenes of our Sins*: Since Christ, I say, *by suffering Death upon the Cross* (as our Church in the Prayer of Consecration declares) *made there a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World*, we apprehend that the substituting more propitiatory Sacrifices wou'd be in effect to declare the Sacrifice made by Christ imperfect and insufficient.

Tho' offer'd but once.

Christ indeed cou'd die but once, and therefore cou'd be sacrific'd but once in his own Person. But this is so far from being an *Imperfection*, that it is one of the highest Commendations of any Sacrifice; as the Author to the *Hebrews*, with great Elegance, and Force of Reasoning, has evinc'd. (b) For, as he there convicts the *legal Sacrifices* of manifest Weaknes and Imperfection, in that (c) *they did not cease to be offer'd*, and makes the continual Repetition of them, rather a *Remembrance*, than any *Abolition* of Sins; in this he places a just *Pre-eminence*, that *the Offering of the Blood of Jesus Christ, once in the End of the World*, has superseded all other Services of this Kind, and is a Demonstration, that he, by this single Act, hath entirely ac-

(a) Eph. i. 7. (b) Stanhope's Serm. at Boyle's
Lect. (c) Heb. x. 2.

complish'd

complish'd all that was necessary for the Salvation of the whole Race of Mankind. The Ages, that were before the Oblation of this great Sacrifice, were included in it, and did reap the Benefits and Advantages of it; for which Reason Christ is called *(a) the Lamb of God*, that, in the Divine Intention, *was slain from the Foundation of the World*: and the Ages, that are still to come, will equally be made Partakers of the same; because he, *(b) who is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World*, has, likewise, *(c) an unchangeable Priesthood*; and is therefore *able to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for us*. Since Christ, in his Death then, had not only a *Retrospect* to the Beginning, but a *Prospect* likewise to the Conclusion of the World, How came it to pass, that he *cou'd not* actually apply the Merits of it to all future, as well as past Generations of Men? If he, *through the eternal Spirit, offer'd himself unto God*; if, when he *was solemnizing the Sacrifice of our Redemption*, he was God, as well as Man, his Omnipotence *cou'd not* fail of having all the Posterity of *Adam* under his View and Consideration; and now, that he is enter'd into *the Holy of Ho-*

(a) Revel. xiii. 8. (b) 1 John ii. 2. (c) Heb. vii. 24, 25.

lies, by the Presentation of his crucified Body and Blood, he maketh perpetual Application of the Merits of his Death to our great and endless Comfort, and thereby vacates the Necessity of any other Oblation daily to be repeated ; (a) which wou'd not be a *commemorating* the Sacrifice once offer'd upon the Cross (as our Lord enjoined us) but disparaging its Worth, and *obliterating* the Memory of it, by offering perpetually *new* ones, which have no Foundation in Scripture.

No Sign
of a Sacri-
fice, at
the Insti-
tution of
the Eu-
charist

The Form of the Sacramental Institution is to this Effect---(b) *Jesus took Bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to his Apostles, and said, Take Eat ; this is my Body. And, in like Manner, he took the Cup, and, when he had given Thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* In the whole Compass of these Words, Is there any Mention, or the least Intimation of *Offering* up any thing to God ? Were not the *Bread* and *Cup* given to be eaten and drank ? Where do we see, that they were applied to any other Use ? Or that there is any thing like an *Oblation*, or *Sacrifice* made of them ? The Truth is, (c) had

(a) Clarke's Serm. vol. 4. (b) Matt. xxvi. 26. and Mark xiv. 22. (c) Vener on the Art.

this

this pretended Sacrifice of Christ at his last Supper, the Night before his Crucifixion, been a true and proper Sacrifice, what needed he to have suffer'd the next Day? If *that* was of the same Nature and Efficacy with the other, did as truly propitiate God, and procure Pardon and Reconciliation of the Sins for Mankind, What Need was there for any farther Expiation? His Sacrifice upon the *Table* might have excus'd his Sacrifice upon the *Cross*: and thus the *bitter Cup* might have *passed from him*; he might have been crucified only in *Effigy*, slain only *mystically* and *sacramentally*; and in this Sense his Body might have been *broken*, and his Blood *shed*, while the one continued whole, and the other still remained in his Veins.

But when our Saviour called the Elements of Bread and Wine, absolutely and without any Restriction, *his Body and Blood*, Did not he offer himself a Sacrifice to God? Or rather, is it not a gross Infatuation in our *Catechist*; Or a violent Attachment to the Sentiments of *Rome*, to take these Words *literally*, which no Person, in his Senses, and not under the Influence of such a *Prepossession*, wou'd have ever thought of understanding otherwise than *figuratively*? Especially, when this figurative Manner of Expression was very frequent in our Saviour's Mouth; as in

When our
Lord nei-
ther offer-
ed up him-
self,

in his calling himself the *Door*, the *Vine*, the *Way*, and the like, which no Man ever yet understood in a *literal Sense*; when, just before the Institution of this Sacrament, (a) in a Discourse about *imbibing, digesting, and practising* his Doctrine, he terms it (b) *Eating his Flesh, and Drinking his Blood*; and when, long before our Saviour's Coming into the World, these very *Phrases* were in Use by the best of Writers, and understood by every common Reader; (c) *for they that eat me* (says Wisdom of old) *shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me, shall yet be thirsty*. So that there was no Occasion for our Lord to explain his Meaning to his Apostles, when they saw him distributing the Bread and Wine with his own Hands; and cou'd not but know, that, as it is a common Form in all Languages to give the Name of the *Thing signified* to the *Sign* that denotes it, so our Saviour, by *this is my Body*, could possibly mean no other, than this *Bread signifies and represents* my Body; and *this is my Blood*, this *Wine signifies and represents* my Blood, which, in a short Time, shall be broken and shed, as a proper and piacular Sacrifice for the Sins of all Mankind; and therefore, when I am taken

(a) Clarke on the Catechism.
(c) Eccl. xxiv. 21.

(b) John vi. 54.

from

from you in this Manner, what ye now see me do, that do ye, *i. e.* continue this Feast of Bread and Wine in Remembrance of me, and of my *laying down my Life*, as a *Ransom for many*. This was the proper Business that our Saviour was then upon ; and in all this Where is there any Sign, either of his offering any Kind of Sacrifice himself, or of constituting others to do it ? The Time for the Exercise of his *Sacerdotal Function* was not yet come.

“ But when our Lord said to his Apostles, *Do or offer this for a Memorial of me*, Nor ap-
 “ Did he not give them, and their Success- pointed his
 “ fors, full Power and Authority to act Apostles to
 “ as *Priests*, and to have Altars whereon
 “ to offer the Sacrifice that he was then
 “ instituting ? ” Or rather, (a) is it not a very
 trifling and ridiculous Argument (unless
 we can suppose, that our Saviour made
 Use of the *vulgar Latin*) that he was now
 employ’d in a *Sacerdotal Act*, offering him-
 self to God, and commanding his Apostles
 to do the same ; because the Word *facio*
 does, sometimes, but very seldom, and
 in some Authors, but those very few,
 signify to *offer* or *sacrifice* ? But then to
 imagine, that, at the same Time, he was
 consecrating his Apostles, and giving them
 Commission to continue the Use of this

(a) Veneer on the Art.

Sacrifice

Sacrifice unto the End of the World, and all in Virtue of this one single *Word*, is so precarious and senseless a Notion, that it only shews what wonderful Streights and Extremities those Men are driven to, who are forced to espouse this Opinion, in order to support their ill fram'd *Hypothesis* about the holy *Eucharist*; wherein they will needs have compriz'd the *Sacrifice of the Mass*.

But only
to admi-
nister the
Sacra-
ment in
the same
Manner
that he
did.

'Tis a gross Mistake of this Writer, therefore, to suppose, that our Lord was, at this Juncture, *ordaining* his Apostles *Priests*. The Time, when he consecrated them to that Office, was not till after his Resurrection, when himself was invested with all Power both in Heaven and Earth. And their Commission runs in this Form--- *As my Father bath sent me, even so I send you. And, when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, &c.* (a) But in the Institution of the Sacrament, when he bids them *do this*, his Meaning is only, that, in the Administration of it, they shou'd behave, as he did, and pursue the same Method that he had set them, *viz. in taking Bread, and breaking it, and in taking Wine, and blessing it*, and then giving or distributing Both to all the Communicants, in the same Manner as they had seen him do it but just before.

(a) John xx. 21, 22, &c.

This

This is the true and natural Sense of our Lord's Injunction to his Apostles. And one wou'd really wonder, how our *Catechist*, out of so small a Matter, shou'd have been able to raise such a Number of Priests, of Altars, of Sacrifices, both *purgative* and *expiatory*; and such a strong Body of Fathers and ancient Writers to assert and support them; but that his Friend (a) *Bellarmino* shewed him the Way, having done the same Thing before him; but without considering, that, tho' the Fathers and Commentators (those especially of the *Greek Church*) who lived some Hundred of Years after the Institution of the Lord's Supper, and when the Language by Degrees had been greatly alter'd, among other lofty Expressions, are very apt to call this Ordinance a *Sacrifice*; yet they cou'd not forbear sometimes to correct this Expression, (as we find (b) St. *Chrysostom* in particular doing) and to declare that *they did not mean a Sacrifice, properly speaking, but only the Remembrance of a Sacrifice.*

“ But are not the *Eucharistick* Ele-
“ ments, after the Invocation of the
“ Holy Ghost, by its sacred Influence and
“ Operation, made the *very Body and Blood of Christ*, as the Fathers every
“ where speak, and as near the same, as

In what
Sense the
Ancients
call'd the
Sacra-
ment a Sa-
crifice.

(a) *De Missâ.*

(b) *In Epist. ad Heb. Hom. 17.*

“ any

Our Cate-
chist seems
to be a
*Consub-
stantiat-
onist.*

“ any Thing can be, without changing its Substance ?” Our Catechist here, to avoid the monstrous Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, seems to have taken up with another Opinion no less repugnant to the Evidence of Sense and Reason, no less inconsistent with Scripture, and the Form of Consecration, and every whit as teeming with Absurdities and Impossibilities, as the former, and that is the Notion of *Consubstantiation* : for, while he contends, that the very Body and Blood of Christ are in the *Sacramental Elements* after Consecration ; and yet these Elements retain, not in Appearance only, but in Reality, the Substance of Bread and Wine, without any Change or Alteration, What can he mean, but that, in this Sacrament, both the Body and Blood of Christ, and the Substance of the Elements, are united and incorporated into each other, and so to be ad-

* P. 296. minister’d : For, to add that the Elements * *are the Body and Blood in real Power and Energy, and to all Intents and Purposes of Religion*, is a *Satvo*, that comes too late ; and is indeed of no other Use, than to cloud his Meaning, and to make the whole Sentence more perplex’d and unintelligible.

Why the Fathers were so full in

their *Commendations* of the Sa-
crament.

The Fathers indeed (whose very Weaknesses our Author is fond of) in their *Sermons and Homilies*, carried their Veneration

neration for the Lord's Supper to a very high Degree. (a) As they apprehended a *Profanation* of it from those that frequented it, and were very zealous to beget a due *Reverence* for so sacred an *Ordinance*, and a becoming *Seriousness* in the Performance of it, they urg'd, for this Purpose, all the *Topicks* that *sublime Figures* and *warm Expressions* cou'd furnish them with. But that, by these Expressions, they never intended any real *Transmutation*, or *Refinement* in the Elements themselves ; to call down Christ from Heaven by any Form of *Invocation* ; to ascribe *Ubiquity* to his *human Nature*, and, under the *Similitude* of Bread and Wine, to convey it to all *Communicants*, is evident from their calling them (even after *Consecration*) the *Figures*, the *Signs*, the *Symbols*, the *Types*, and *Antitypes*, the *Commemoration*, the *Representation*, the *Mysteries* and the *Sacraments* of the *Body* and *Blood*. Which is a plain Argument, that, however the *Warmth* of their *Zeal* and *Affections* might sometimes transport them beyond the strict *Propriety* of *Speech* ; yet their settled *Persuasion* (as (b) *Theodoret* has stated it) was this---*That the mystical Symbols, after Consecration, do not pass out of their own Nature ; for they remain in their former Substance, Figure,*

Tho' they
did not
believe
any
Change in
the Ele-
ments.

(a) Burnet on Art. 28.

(b) Dial 2.

and

and Appearance, and may be seen and handled, even as before.

In which
there was
no Reason.

In the Sacrament of *Baptism* we see, that Consecration makes no Change, or visible Improvement, in the Element of Water: and Why shou'd we suppose any in the other Sacrament? Is it because (a) St. *Matthew* informs us, that our Saviour took *Bread*, and *blessed it*, and, by that Blessing, made it his Body? But this will appear to be a groundless Notion, if we do but observe, (b) that the Word *it* is added by our *Translators*, without any thing in the *Original* to answer or require it; that the *Greek Expression*, which (c) St. *Paul* and (d) St. *Luke* make Use of, upon the same Occasion, is *Giving Thanks*, *viz.* to God; and that therefore the *Blessing*, in St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, being of the same Signification with *Giving of Thanks*, must not relate to the *Bread*, but to *God*, and, consequently, make the Meaning of the Evangelists to be thus express'd----*Jesus, having taken Bread, and blessed God, brake it*; which quite sets aside that Part of the Consecration, which our

* P. 231, Catechist calls * *the Invocation, or Prayer for a Blessing upon the Eucharistick Elements to make them the Body and Blood of Christ*,
&c.

(a) Matt. xxvi. 26. (b) Bp. *Hoadly's plain Account.*
(c) 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24. (d) Luke xxix. 19.

with

with all his learned Citations from the Fathers concerning it.

And, indeed why shou'd we desire so much to have the Elements transformed? Or of what Use or Advantage wou'd it be, supposing the Possibility of such a Transmutation, since the Power and Efficacy of the Sacrament must *ultimately* lie, not in the *Materials* (how much soever refin'd, and exalted in their Nature) but

Because its
Virtue lies
not in its
Material
Part, but
in the
Blessing of
God ac-
company-
ing it.

in the Blessing of God annex'd to the Institution? (a) " As Water in Baptism " (says the great Bp. *Tillotson*) without any " substantial Change in that Element, by " the divine Blessing accompanying that " Institution, may be effectual to the " Washing away of Sin, and to spiritual " Regeneration; so there can be no Reason " in the World given, why the Elements " of Bread and Wine in the Lord's Supper " may not, by the same divine Blessing " accompanying this Institution, make the " worthy Receivers Partakers of all the " Benefits, which they were design'd to " convey, since the spiritual Nature of " the Sacrament does not depend upon " the Nature of the *Thing receiv'd* (sup- " posing we receive what our Lord ap- " pointed, and receive it with a right Pre- " paration and Disposition of Mind) but

(a) Against Transub.

I

" upon

“ upon the supernatural Blessing that goes along with it, and makes it effectual to those spiritual Purposes, for which it was appointed.”

“Tis in vain then (a) to say in thine Heart, *Who shall ascend into Heaven,* and prevail with Christ to come down thence, and incorporate himself with the Elements? *That is to bring him down from above,* which no Priest with all his *Invocations,* no Power upon Earth can do; because it is decreed, that (b) *him must the Heaven receive,* until the Time of the Restitution of all Things.

In what Sense Christ may be said to be present in the Sacrament, viz. virtually.

But, notwithstanding his local Presence in Heaven, he may be virtually present here, and with whomsoever he is virtually present (says the learned (c) Dr. Jackson) i. e. to whomsoever he communicates the Influence of his Body and Blood by his Spirit, he is really present with them, tho' locally absent from them; just as the Sun by the kindly Warmth, which it imparts, cherishes and enlivens the Earth below, tho' it never moves from that superior Orb, wherein God has placed it; even so (and much more effectually) does our Lord, at every Celebration of his Supper, dispense the Blessings, which his meritorious Blood-shedding has obtain'd for us, to every faithful Communicant here on Earth; even now

(a) Rom. x. 6.

(b) Acts iii. 21.

(c) Vol. 3.

that

that he is exalted to God's Right Hand, and everlastinglly there enthron'd. Upon the whole therefore we may conclude, that the *real Presence*, so much talk'd of, is not to be sought in the *outward Elements*, but in the Blessing of God accompanying his own Ordinance ; and the Influence and Emis-
sion of *Virtue* from his heavenly Sanctua-
ry into the Soul of every one that *receives*
with Faith, nothing doubting.

To illustrate this farther by a Scripture Comparison, or Piece of History. The *Hem* of our Saviour's Garment, we con-
ceive, was of no Validity to heal the poor
Woman's *Issue of Blood*, that (*a*) we read
of in the Gospel, and yet, by a lively
Faith in him, we find it did. Now since
the *consecrated Elements* (according to the
above-cited Author) are as much, if not
more to us, than the *Hem* of his Garment ;
if we do but touch and taste them with
the same Faith that this Woman had in
touching his Garment, they will ; tho'
not by any Force and Energy of their own,
yet by a divine Virtue, and supernatural
Power proceeding from him, *make us whole*,
cure the Sores and Ulcers of our Souls, and
confer on us all those other Graces and Be-
nefits that we are entitled to, upon Ac-
count of his *Passion*. For, (*b*) tho' the

This il-
lustrated
by a Scrip-
ture Simi-
litude.

And that
Way as
beneficialy
to us as if
he were
really in
the Ele-
ments.

(*a*) Matt. ix. 20, &c.

(*b*) Clarke's Ser. vol. 4.

Sacrifice of his Death was once *offer'd for all*, and therefore cannot be daily repeated; tho' the Substance of his Body and Blood is not, in any intelligible Manner, produc'd *anew* out of the Elements of Bread and Wine; tho' the Grace of God is not confin'd, by a necessary Connection, to the material Action, so as to work any spiritual Advantage without a proper and devout Disposition in the Receiver; yet, when with Hearts full of Piety and true Devotion, with stedfast Faith in God, and firm Resolutions of Amendment, Men thankfully and in the Manner appointed by God, commemorate this Sacrifice of the Death of Christ once offer'd for ever, if, through the Assistance of the Spirit of God annex'd, not to the material Elements, nor to the outward Action, but to the Ordinance itself, accompanied with the divine Blessing, they find their Faith in God to be increas'd, their Hope and Trust in him strengthened, their Charity towards their Brethren enlarged, their good Resolutions for the future confirm'd, and their Hopes of Pardon for their past Offences, through the Intercession of him who died for them, enliven'd: If these, and the like, I say, are the blessed Effects, that they perceive in their Souls, Who can say, but that the Benefits of such Communicating are the same, as great, and as inestimable,

as

as we can possibly imagine, were the Elements never so much transform'd, improv'd, and spiritualiz'd by the Priest officiating in the Consecration? " But if these Things be so, * What shall we say * P. 287.

" to the sixth Chapter of St. John's Gospel;

" especially to these remarkable Words

" in it---(a) *Whosoever eateth my Flesh,* Some Ex-

" *and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life,* pressions in

" *and I will raise him up at the last Day;* the vith

" *for my Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood* Chap. of

" *is Drink indeed. He that eateth my Flesh,* St. John's

" *and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me,* Gospel ex-

" *and I in him:* which can be understood plain'd,

" of nothing, but of Sacramental Eating and shewn

" and Drinking, especially considering, not to re-

" that the general Consent of the ancient late to the

" Fathers of the primitive Church ever Sacra-

" was, to interpret these Passages of the ment.

" Evangelist, in the Sense that we now

" contend for?" Our Author of the two

Catechisms needs not admire so much (as

+ we find he does) at the Strangeness, and + P. 288,

Singularity of the Phrases of *eating our*

Lord's Flesh, and drinking his Blood, had

he but remember'd, that nothing was more

common among the *Eastern Nations*, than

to use the *Metaphor of Eating and Drinking,*

not as relating to any bodily Meat or

Drink, but purely to what was *spiritual,*

(a) John vi. 54, &c.

and conducive to the Nourishment of the Soul: That this Manner of Discourse was more especially frequent among the best Jewish Writers; inasmuch that we find Solomon himself representing (a) *Wisdom*, as saying unto him that wanteth Understanding, *Come, eat of my Bread, and drink of my Wine, that I have mingled*; even as (b) Philo calls Wisdom, Temperance, and Piety, *the Food of a Soul that can suck them in*: and that therefore it shou'd not be look'd upon as a strange Thing, to find our blessed Master pursuing the same Method of Instruction, in his Sermon upon the Mount, telling us, (c) that *blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled or satiated*; and (as the Oriental Custom was) in his other Discourses, employing sometimes such Figures and Allegories, as to us may seem strong and bold. (d) In these he consider'd the *Genius* of those to whom he spoke; but he never intended, that they shou'd be carried beyond the Design for which he spoke them. Now his Design in this Chapter of St. John was to shew, that his Doctrine was more excellent than the Law of Moses; and that, tho' Moses gave the *Israelites Manna from Heaven*, to

(a) *Prov. ix. 45.* (b) *Lib. quod deter.* (c) *Matt. v. 6.*
(d) *Burnet on Art. 28.*

nourish their Bodies, they, nevertheless, (a) *died in the Wilderness*; whereas Christ was to distribute to his Followers such Food, as wou'd give them Life to that Degree, that, if they did eat of it, they shou'd never die. This is the plain Design of our Saviour's Discourse; and from hence it appears, that, as the *Bread* and Nourishment must necessarily be *such* as the *Life* was; since the *Life* was *spiritual* and *eternal*, such must the *Bread* be likewise: and the Manner of receiving it must be by *Faith*; because our Saviour says expressly, (b) *He that believeth in me, bath everlasting Life*; and if this *Life* came by *Faith*, then can this *Bread*, which is receiv'd by *Faith*, be no other than his *Doctrine*: and, consequently, the Phrase of *eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*, can be only a very high *figurative Expression* to the *Jews*, then about him, of their *Duty* and *Obligation* to receive into their *Hearts*, and digest in their *Minds*, his *whole Doctrine*, as the *Food* and *Life* of their *Souls*: For 'tis in this Manner that he himself interprets them, in the Conclusion of his Discourse: (c) *The Words, that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life*; which are a *Key* to the *Whole*, and plainly import, that what

(a) John vi. 49, &c. (b) Ver. 47. (c) Ver. 63.

he had said all along upon the foregoing Subject, was to be understood in a *figurative* and spiritual Sense. So plain it is, from our Saviour's own Explication, that he never design'd this Discourse in St. John to be understood of his future Institution of the Lord's Supper, and, consequently, that his Words in that Institution ought not to be taken in a *literal*, but *figurative* Signification.

Even according to the *Testimony* of the Fathers.

Our Catechist indeed tells us, that the *Ancient Fathers* of the primitive Church were unanimously agreed in a *literal Interpretation* of this Chapter, and in their *Application* of it to the Doctrine of the Eucharist: But herein he seems to have overlook'd *Clemens of Alexandria*, who informs us, (a) that, *when our Lord said, Eat my Flesh, and drink my Blood, be allegorically meant the Drinking of Faith, and of the Promises; and that our Lord is, by Way of Allegory, to those that believe in him, Meat, and Drink, and Nourishment, and Flesh, and Blood*: To have overlook'd *Tertullian*, who tells us, that our Lord, all along, urg'd his Intent by Allegory, (b) *calling his Word Flesh, as being to be hunger'd after, that we might have Life, to be devour'd by the Ear, ruminated upon by the Mind, and by Faith digested*: To have overlook'd *Athanasius*,

(a) *Pædag. L. 11. C. 6.*

(b) *De Resur. Carnis*

who

who assures us, (a) that the Words which Christ spake, were not carnal, but spiritual, for how cou'd his Body have suffic'd for Meat, that it shou'd be made the Food of the whole World? And therefore (to mention no more) we shall conclude this Argument with that remarkable Observation of St. Austin, concerning the Exposition of Scripture Phrases, (b) If the Saying is preceptive, either forbidding a wicked Action, or commanding that which is good, it is no figurative Speech; but if it seems to command any Wickedness, or to forbid what is profitable and good, it is figurative. Thus, this Saying, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, ye have no Life in you, seems to command a wicked Thing; and is therefore a Figure, enjoining us to communicate in the Passion of our Lord, and sweetly and profitably to remember, that his Flesh was wounded and crucified for us.

This is the general Sense of the Fathers concerning those controverted Passages, in that famous Chapter of St. John; and the Suspicion of this Writer's strong Propensity to Popery cannot but be farther augmented from the Inclination, he shews, of reviving the ancient Custom * of carrying some Part of the consecrated Elements Home, or of sending them to such as were

The Use
and Abuse
of reser-
ving and
carrying
about the
consecra-
ted Ele-
ments,
and the
Reform.
that our
Church
has made
therein.

(a) Tom. 1. P. 979. (b) De Doct. Christ. L. 3. C. 16.* P. 371.
absent,

absent, and had heard nothing of the Eucharistick Office ; which comes very near to what (a) the Council of Trent, upon the same Presumption, has decreed ; and which, (b) whoever has seen the Pomp and Pageantry of a solemn *Procession* in Popish Countries, and the Idolatrous Worship and Prostrations, that are paid to the *Host*, when carried through the Streets, and attended with a long Train of *Priests*, cannot but abhor. We acknowledge indeed (c) that the Custom of reserving, and sending about the consecrated Elements, began very early ; for, when there were, as yet, but few converted to Christianity, and but few Priests to serve them, they neither cou'd, nor durst meet together, especially in the Times of Persecution ; and then was it thought convenient, to send some Part of the Elements to the Absent, to those in Prison, and, more especially, to those that were Sick, as a *Symbol* of their being Members of Christ's mystical Body, and in Union and Communion with the Church : But it was not long before this Practice came to be abus'd. (d) In a short Time, the consecrated Bread was carried Home by the Communicants, and lock'd up in Boxes, as a sacred Treasure, for their pri-

(a) *Seff.* 13. C. 6. de Eucharist. (b) *Vid.* Dr. Middleton's Letter from Rome. (c) *Burnet, ibid.* (d) Middleton's *Introd. Disc.*

vate Use ; and, by the more *superstitious* Sort of them, look'd upon as an *Anulet* or *Charm*, that wou'd secure them from all Dangers, that wou'd work Miracles, drive Devils out of haunted Houses, and, in short, perform such astonishing Wonders, as made it unavoidably be taken for something apparently divine, and worthy of Adoration : for which Reason, it was, in after Ages, always sent to the Sick in great Solemnity, sometimes set out with Pomp upon the Altar to be worshipped, and at others carried about in vast Pomp and Magnificence, to make it more honourable, and more tremendous in the Thoughts of its Spectators.

Such is the present Practice of the Church of *Rome* ; and such is the Notion, which this Writer wou'd infuse into his Readers, by insinuating, * *That, in Virtue of Christ's Institution, the Elements may be profitable to the Absent, and to Infants, that know nothing of their Consecration* ; (a) whereas the Words of the Institution are, *Take, eat, and drink ye all of it*, which plainly import, that the Consuming the Elements is Part of the Institution : and, consequently, they are only a *Sacrament*, as they are distributed by the Priest, and receiv'd by the People. Good Reason therefore had our

^{* P. 371.}

(a) Burnet on Art. 28.

Church

Church to declare (a) that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not, by Christ's Ordinance, to be reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped; and, by cutting off these Abuses, to restore it to its primitive Simplicity, according to its Institution, and the Practice of the first and purest Ages.

C H A P. VI.

Of PURGATORY and PRAYERS
for the Dead.

The Pa-
pist and
Catechist
differ in
their ex-
pressing
this Arti-
cle.

* P. 164.

EVERY Member of the Romish Communion, in the daily Confession of his Faith, speaks out boldly, and says, (b) I do firmly believe, that there is a Purgatory, and that the Souls, detain'd therein, are helped by the Prayers of the Faithful: but our Catechist here (tho' he may mean the same Thing) seems to mince the Matter a little, and in Words endeavours to disguise it. He tells us, that, * as the Saints in Paradise pray for us, we ought to pray for the Faithful departed, even for the Forgiveness of their Sins: for, tho' they are at Rest and Peace, yet there is Reason to think, that the Prayers of the Church may

(a) Art. 28.

(b) Popish Creed, Art. 19.

improve

improve their Condition, and increase the Blessedness of their intermediate Period; and may prevail moreover, that some lesser Failings may be excus'd, some Rigours of the last Judgment abated, and some Faults, for which they might otherwise suffer in the Conflagration, be passed over.

We own indeed, that, in the early Times of Christianity, and long before the Doctrine of *Purgatory* was settled, in the Manner it now is, it was an Opinion entertain'd by some, (a) "that the *Conflagration*, at the last Day, was to pass upon all, even tho' they were to be *Heirs of Salvation*; that this was to give the last and highest Purification to their Bodies, which were soon to be glorified; but that the more pious and virtuous any Christian had been, the less he shou'd feel the Pains of that last Fire." This Notion our Catechist might possibly have in his Thoughts, and from thence take Occasion to disguise his Meaning: For that by his Conflagration he cou'd not possibly mean that amazing *Catastrophe* of Nature, when (b) the *Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements melt with fervent Heat, and the Earth also shall, and all that are therein shall be burnt*, is plain; because he cou'd not but know, that the

(a) Burnet on Art. 22.

(b) 2 Pet. iii. 10.

Design of this Fire was not to *purify*, but to *consume*; not to touch and affect the *Righteous*, but to punish and torment the *Wicked*.

Not the
general
burning of
the World
at the last
Day.

'Tis in this Manner that the Scriptures describe the Process of the last great Day--
(a) *That the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God*; That, having fix'd his Judgment Seat, or *Throne of Glory*, in the Air, and summon'd all, both quick and dead, to appear before him, he shou'd (b) make a proper *Separation* of the *Wicked* from the *Righteous*; and that the *Righteous* (who shall be judged first) after an honourable *Acquittal*, and joyful *Sentence*, (c) *being caught up into the Clouds, shall meet the Lord in the Air, and so be for ever with him*: where we read of no *Conflagration*, no *purifying Fire*, that the *Just* must be compell'd to pass through. But now, on the contrary, when the *Wicked* have been tried, and found *Guilty*, immediately after their *Sentence*, by which they stand condemn'd to *everlasting Fire*, (d) an *everlasting Fire* will kindle round about them, which, in a few Moments, will spread itself all over this lower *World*; and, turning the whole *Atmosphere* into

(a) 1 Thess. ii. 16. (b) Matt. xxv. 32. (c) 1 Thes. iv. 17. (d) Scot's Mediator.

one continued Flame, will properly constitute the *local Hell* of the Damn'd ; and for this Opinion there is this Foundation in Scripture---(a) *That the Heavens and the Earth, which are now, are kept in Store, reserv'd unto Fire, against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of the Ungodly* : So that it is for the Wicked only, that this terrible Scene of fiery Indignation is prepar'd. The Righteous have nothing to suffer from it ; They are immediately *caught up into the Clouds*, there to sit *Assessors* with their Lord, in the Tryal of the Ungodly, and, thence returning with him in Triumph to the highest Heavens, for ever leave this burning World behind them.

Upon the whole therefore it appears, that our *Catechift*, by his *Conflagration*, cou'd not mean the *final Destruction* of this World by Fire, but was minded (for Reasons that may be guess'd at) to substitute one Word in the Room of another. And in this we are the more confirm'd ; because he * makes the Prayers, and Alms, and * P. 164. *Eucharistick Sacrifices* of the Faithful improve the Condition, increase the Happiness, excuse the Faults and Failings, and alleviate the Pains and Sufferings of departed Souls ; just as the *Papifts* impute the same Effects to their *Maffes*, and other Ser-

(a) 2 Pet. iii. 7.

vices

vices, with Regard to such Souls as are supposed to be detain'd in *Purgatory*, a Kind of Middle Place (as they represent it) between Heaven and Hell, where, for lesser Sins, not expiated in this Life, Souls are confin'd, and by Punishment purified, before they are admitted into the Presence of God; where no polluted or unclean thing can enter.

Several Opinions concerning the State of departed Souls in the early Ages of the Church.

In the early Times of Christianity, many curious *Questions* began to be agitated concerning the State of departed Souls. Some were of Opinion, that all, who lived in the Fear, and died in the Favour of God, were immediately admitted into his Presence, and to a full Fruition of all the Happiness they were capable of. Others imagin'd, that, tho' this might be the Portion of some *peculiarly* pious Persons (those especially who suffer'd *Martyrdom*) yet the Generality of Christians, tho' in a good Measure happy, and easy after Death, had not the perfect *Consummation* of their Bliss, until the Reunion of their Bodies; whilst others suppos'd, that as the Soul, in its Separation, cou'd not be *dormant* or idle, it being conscious of some Offences committed, and not repented of, while in the Body, was now employing itself in the Business of wiping out these, and *trimming its Lamp* (as it were) against the

the Bridegroom's Coming. (a) *Plato* us'd to talk of a middle Sort of Men, who, tho' they had finned, yet had repented of it, and being in a *curable Condition* (as he calls it) went down, for some Time, to Hell, to be purg'd, and absolv'd by Torments. The *Jews* had likewise a Conceit, that the Souls of some Men continued, for a Year, going up and down in a State of *Purgation*; and 'tis not unlikely, that these Notions, retain'd by *Jewish* or *Platonick* Converts to Christianity, might, after some Time, discover themselves in their Writings and Discourses, and so lay the first Foundation of the Doctrine of *Purgatory* in future Ages: but at this Time (we may observe) the general Opinion was, that the *Faithful* were not only in Happiness immediately after their Departure, but instantly carried into Heaven: and therefore we find (b) St. *Cyprian* telling us, that it is only for him to fear *Death*, who is unwilling to go to *Christ*; and that it is for him to be unwilling to go to *Christ*, who does not believe that he then beginneth to reign with *Christ*: And as the same (c) St. *Cyprian* asserts, that there neither is, nor can be *Confession* of *Sins*, or any other kind of *Penance among the Dead*; so we must allow it to be a standing Doc-

But that of
Purgatory
then un
known.

(a) *Burnet* on Art. 22.
(c) *Epist.* 55.

(b) *De Mortalitate.* p. 157.

trine in his Age, that, as in the other World, the Soul was incapable of being purg'd, or making Satisfaction, that Soul, which was clear of Sin by God's Pardon and Forgivenes, no Fire cou'd hurt; *that* which was not so, no Fire cou'd cleanse, but was doom'd to remain in the Torments of Hell for ever.

* P. 166.
Which has
no Foun-
dation in
Reason,
there be-
ing no
such thing
as *venial*
Sins.

“ * But are there not some Sins in their own Nature *venial*, which a Man may depart this Life unrepenting of, and may it not then be necessary to have him pun-
nish'd, and purg'd from them in ano-
ther (a)? ” That there are some Sins *less* than others must be confess'd (b); but that any Sins are properly *venial*, this we deny. To be *Venial* is to be worthy of Pardon, or not to deserve Punishment; but whatsoever does not deserve Punishment, can be no Sin, for all Sins infer an Obligation to Punishment: and therefore to be a *Sin*, and yet be *venial*, is, in its proper Terms, no better than a *flat Contradiction*. But allowing that some Sins are *venial*; How does it from hence follow, that it is necessary that these shou'd be punish'd in another Life? And why is not the Blood of Christ, which cleanses the greatest Sins, a sufficient *Purgatory* for the least Infirmitiess?

(a) Bellarmin. de Purgat.
Popery, Vol. 2.

(b) Preservat. from

Venial

venial Sins are by themselves confess'd to be intirely consistent with the Grace of God, nay so consistent as not to destroy, or but even *lessen* it. Now for a Christian, who has lived so well, as to be still in the Grace and Favour of God; who has received an *actual* Pardon of all his other Sins, through the Merits and Satisfaction of Christ, so as to be absolutely certain of a Crown of Glory for ever; to think, that such an one, I say, shall be punish'd with Torments, cruel Torments, for such Slips and Infirmitiess, as the best of Men are encompassed with, and which no Man can ever hope perfectly to overcome; and this, notwithstanding all the Promises of Mercy and Forgiveness, which God has declar'd to us: This certainly is so inconsistent with the divine Attributes, and so far from being a Dictate of *right Reason*, that it is impossible for any one, that has *any Reason* at all, and is not exceedingly carried away with Prejudice for his Opinion, ever to believe it.

Had there indeed been any *Means*, in this Contrivance, either to fit Men for Heaven, or to satisfy the divine Justice, there might have then been some Pretence for it; But, in Bar to this, it is the Observation of the Royal Preacher, (a) that there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wis-

And can
be of no
Service
to depart-
ed Souls.

(a) Eccl. ix. 10.

Of Purgatory and

dom in the Grave, whither thou goest ; for, (a) if the Tree fall toward the South, or toward the North, in the Place, where the Tree falleth, there it shall be : and therefore to the Wicked (b) there remaineth nothing, but a fearful Looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation ; whereas (c) blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them. So that here is no Occasion for any Eucharistick Sacrifices, for Men's Purchasing Prayers and Masses of the Church, for the Remission of their Sins after Death, or the Repose of their Souls : Their Fate is finally determin'd, the very Moment they step out of this Life ; even as our Saviour represents the Matter in the Parable of Lazarus and the rich Glutton, whose Souls were instantly carried into different Abodes, (d) the one to be comforted, as the other was tormented, nor can all the Prayers and Intercessions upon Earth remove the great Gulf that is fix'd between them.

Praying
for the
Dead why
intro-
duc'd.

While we are on Earth indeed, God has commanded us to pray for one another, and has made that a singular Act of our Charity and Church Communion ; but he has no where directed us to pray for

(a) Eccl. xi. 3. (b) Heb. x. 26, 27. (c) Rev. xiv. 13.
(d) Luke xvi. 25, 26.

thoſe

those that have *finish'd* their Course. Of this there is not the least Hint given us in Scripture ; and therefore the Custom of doing this, so frequently mention'd in the Writings of the Fathers, must have sprung (as we said before) from some erroneous Notions, concerning the State of the Dead at that Time, and has since been confirm'd by the Doctrine of *Purgatory*, which was ingrafted upon it about the *sixth* Century, and has ever since been retain'd, upon Account of the great Gain and Advantage it brings into the Church, by *saying Masses for departed Souls* ; (a) which being the most sublime Act of divine Worship (as the *Papists* pretend) God cannot but be highly pleas'd with the frequent Repetition of it ; with the Prayers that accompany it, and with those likewise that make Provisions for the Men who are constantly employ'd in it ; but in so doing are not so properly (b) *serving the Lord Jesus Christ, as their own Belly*.

The *Catechist* pretends to have establish'd this Doctrine of praying for the Dead * from the Authority of Scripture, as well as Has no Foundation in Scripture. Testimony of the Fathers. The Testi- * P. 336. mony of some Fathers we grant him ; but the Scripture Passages, that he makes Choice of for that Purpose (as the Reader

(a) Burnet, *ibid.*

(b) Rom. xvi. 18.

may presently perceive) are in themselves so *obscure*, and of such dubious and difficult Interpretation, that, with a little of his *Wrestling* and Management, they may be applied to any other Subiect as well; and 'tis an Argument to me, that he was hard put to it for Scripture Proofs, when he was forced to have Recourse to the *Second Book of Maccabees*, (a) a Work of a *mean Character*, never received by the *Jews* as *Canonical*, and of whose *Authenticalness* the Primitive Christian Church, for the first *Six Hundred Years*, was far from being satisfied; and to an *Historical Passage* in the *xiith Chapter* of it, full of *Absurdities*, nor of any other Use, than to teach us, that the Author of it (whoever he was) had imbib'd that common Opinion of the *Jews*, viz. *that every one of their Nation shall have a Share in the World to come, only the Wicked are to be purged before they arrive at it*: for such he makes the Meaning of *Judas*, with Regard to the Men that were slain in Battle, but afterwards found to have been guilty of *Idolatry*, which is quite another thing than *Offering and Praying for the Faithful departed*: nor can we imagine, that our *Catechist* ever supposed (as *Judas* is made to do) that the *Wicked*, who died in the *damnable Sin of Idolatry*,

(a) *Preservative against Popery*, Vol. 2.

werd

were capable of reaping any Benefit from the Prayers or Sacrifices of the Living ; but here his Friend (a) *Bellarmin* misled him.

* *The Saints in Paradise pray for us,* says the *Catechist*. It may be so, but that is, because we are still in a State of Trial and Probation ; which can be no Reason for our Praying for them, who are not in that State.

† *Praying for the Dead was likewise a very early Practice among the best of Christians.*

That may be true too ; but we cannot therefore say, (b) that the holy Men, who first set the Pattern, were infallible in every thing they did ; or that we ought to receive, at all Adventures, whatever can be prov'd to have descended from them.

The most, that ever the Fathers offer'd for this Practice, was only *the Custom of the Church* :

Tertullian expressly places it among those Things which are not written ; and therefore there is no Occasion for making any great Apology for our Omission of it, since there is neither *Precept* nor *Example* of any such Practice to be found in the holy Scriptures. And by those, who make them the Rule of their Religion, I do not see that any more need to be said, than this--- “ That we find “ nothing there to authorize such Devotion ; and that therefore we cannot think

(a) *De Purgat.* L. 1. C. 3.
Popery, Vol. 2.

(b) *Preservat.* against

* P. 16.

† P. 336,
&c.

And there-
fore, tho'
practis'd
by some
early
Christians,
can be of
Obligation

“ it

“ it fitting to make it a Part of the Church’s
“ Service.”

And is
justly laid
aside by
our
Church.

If then the Custom of *praying for the Faithful departed* has no Foundation in Scripture, nor any other Warrant to vouch or recommend it, but *Practice only*, and a Practice that probably arose from some *erroneous* Notions concerning the *intermediate State of the Dead*: If this Custom can be of no Benefit to the Dead, *whose Soul* (as our Church (*a*) in her Homily expresses it) *passing out of the Body, goeth straitways either to Heaven, or else to Hell; whereof the one needeth no Prayers, the other is without Redemption*: If this Custom has frequently been abus’d to very bad Purposes, and applied to the Support of a Doctrine which is a mere *Figment*, and invented for *filthy Lucre’s Sake*, we cannot think it any Imputation on the Church of *England*, that she chuses to recede from the Example of the *Ancients* in this Particular, and, instead of praying *to the Dead*, which is *impious*, or praying *for the Dead*, which is *needless*, she contents herself, in her *Funeral-Office*, with “ beseeching God, “ that it may please him, of his gracious “ Goodness, shortly to accomplish the “ Number of his Elect, and to hasten his “ Kingdom, that we, with all those that

(*a*) Concerning Prayer.

“ are

“ are departed in the true Faith of his
“ holy Name, may have our perfect Con-
“ summation and Bliss, both in Body and
“ Soul, in his eternal and everlasting
“ Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord
“ Amen.”

C H A P. VII.

Of Penance and private Confession.

THE Church of *Rome* looks upon The ^{Pa-}
Penance (a) as one of her seven <sup>Piſt's and
Catechift's
Agree-
ment as to
this Ar-
ticle.</sup>
Sacraments, which was *inſtituted by Jesus
Christ, and is ſo neceſſary to Salvation, that,* if any one ſhall ſay (as the Council (b) of *Trent* expreſſes it) *that God has no Satisfaction made him, by the Punishments which he himſelf inficts, by thoſe which the Priеſt injoins, or thoſe that the Penitent voluntarily undertakes, ſuch as Fastings, Prayers, Alms, and other Works of Piety; and that therefore the beſt Repentance is only a good Life; and that (c) if any one ſhall ſay, that the Manner of private Confession to the Priеſt only is contrary to the Inſtitution and Command of Christ, and a mere human Invention, or that, (d) in the Sacrament of Pe-*

(a) Popiſh Creed, Art. 15.
(c) Can. 6.

(b) Sess. 14. Can. 13.
(d) Can. 7.

nance, it is not necessary for the Forgiveness of Sins to confess all and singular such heinous and mortal Sins, as, upon due Premeditation, we can remember, together with all their aggravating Circumstances, let him be accursed.

Our Catechist indeed does not proceed so far, as to advance *Penance* into a Sa-

• P. 400. crament, * tho' he makes the Parts of it, viz. *Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction* (which he calls likewise *Penance*) the very same as do the *Papists*, and enjoins it as a *Duty incumbent on all Christians*.

† P. 403. † He presses it upon them with great Variety of Arguments; and endeavours to

‡ P. 404. make it appear, that ‡ the *afflictive Duties of Repentance, or voluntary Severities*, which

|| P. 402. Men impose upon themselves, || such as *Weeping, Mourning, Watching, Praying, Fasting, and Mortification of all Sorts*, shou'd bear Proportion to the Greatness of their Sins; and that, to obtain the Forgive-

§ P. 415. ness of such Sins, § *private Confession to the Priest* is, in several Cases, highly convenient, if not absolutely necessary.

In what
Sense the
Word *Pe-
nance* is
to be ta-
ken.

Now, as *Penance*, or *Penitence*, is a Term deriv'd from the *Latin* Translation of a *Greek* Word, which signifies a *Change*, or *Renovation of the Mind*, it has been not improperly thought by some, that the true *Penance*, requir'd in the *Gospel*, is the *Forsaking*

Forsaking of Sin; (a) the Putting off concerning the former Conversation (as the Apostle speaks) the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; and being renew'd in the Spirit of our Minds, the Putting on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness: But, because our Adversaries do chiefly intend by the Word Penance those Acts of Severity or Sufferings, which either the Church, for the Discouragement of Vice, imposes upon Delinquents; Or Delinquents, when they come to feel the Burden of their Sins, and are willing to get quit of it, think proper to impose upon themselves; in this Acceptation we must use the Word; and, having consider'd a little the Nature both of publick and private Penance, shall observe, what Changes they underwent, and how they came to degenerate so grossly in the Christian Church.

The Apostles indeed, in the Beginning of Christianity, had the Power of inflicting bodily Punishments, and even Death itself, upon Offenders. But, " how long this " miraculous Power lasted in the Church " (b) I know not (says the learned *Cave*;) " or whether at all beyond the Apostles " Age." St. Paul, by giving *Timothy*

(a) Eph. iv. 22, &c. (b) Prim. Christ. Part 3. C. 5.

this

this Injunction--- (a) *Them, that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear,* plainly shews, that publick Admonitions and Reproofs, in the Face of the whole Congregation, of such as were guilty of great and scandalous Offences, were previous to higher Severities: But, if such gentle Methods made no Amendment in the Offender, then the common Penalty, inflicted upon him, was *Excommunication*, or Suspension from Communion in the Ordinances of the Church, which *Suspension* was greater or less, longer or shorter, according to the Nature of the Crime, and the Party's Behaviour under this Sentence. Some Time after the Days of the Apostles, the Custom was, if the Party was truly penitent, and resolv'd to make God and the Church some Amends for the Scandal of his Crime, (b) for him to appear in all the *Formalities* of Sorrow and Mourning, in a *squalid* Habit, and with a dejected Countenance, standing at the Doors of the Church (for he was not permitted to enter in) publickly confessing his Faults, and begging the Prayers of all good Christians, as they passed by, which he daily and constantly did, until the *Term* of his Penance was finish'd, and himself restor'd to the *Communion* of the Church.

(a) 1 Tim. v. 20.

(b) Cave, ibid.

Now

Now this Course of Severity was impos'd upon Offenders, partly to make them sensible of their Sins ; partly to deter others from the like wicked Practices, but principally to give *Satisfaction* both to God and his Church, concerning the Reality and Sincerity of their Repentance : And for this Reason we find these external Acts of Sorrow and Mortification, in the Writings of some of the Ancients, very frequently stil'd by the Name of *Satisfactions* ; (a) not meaning thereby (as our Adversaries wou'd interpret them) that they are of any Value to satisfy the Divine Justice ; (nothing but the Blood of *Jesus* can do that) but meaning only, that they satisfy those Conditions, which the Gospel requires of Penitents, as necessary, both for their present Correction, and future Caution. The Truth is, the Fathers look'd upon these *Penances* only as Medicines of our vicious Natures, and an external Satisfaction (if we may call them so) to the Church, by repairing the Scandal of some wicked Action. That this was their real Notion of them is plain from their *Indulgences*, which were only Remissions of some Part of these Penances ; when those, who had the Direction of them, perceiv'd, that they had wrought a true Repentance, and perform'd the Cure

(a) Young's Serm. Vol. 2.

they

they were sent upon : But they never applied them to the Punishment of Sin, nor did they imagine, that there cou'd be any Virtue in them to discharge any, the least, Share or Proportion of it : And therefore the *novel* Doctrine, which the *Papists* and their Adherents pretend to derive from these very Fathers, (a) viz. "That by Works
 " of Penance Compensation is made to God
 " for the Debt of Punishment, of tempo-
 " ral Punishment at least, contracted by
 " our Transgressions, is meritoriously ex-
 " piated, and done away," can find no
 Sanction in their Authority.

And how
 its *Stric-
 ness* came
 to decay.

Such was the *Stric-
 ness* and Severity of
publick Penance in the Church for a con-
 siderable Time : But, (b) about the Begin-
 ning of the *fifth* Century, under Pretence
 of providing for the *Modesty* of Penitents,
 in not bringing them before the whole
 Congregation to confess their Crimes, they
 were permitted to perform their Penance
 in some *Monastery*, or other private Place,
 in the Presence of a few good Men, such
 as the Bishop shou'd appoint; and, after that
 was ended, they receiv'd Absolution in Se-
 cret. Thus it continu'd until the *seventh*
 Century, when every Kind of *publick*
 Penance for secret Sins was quite taken
 away ; and, (as if this was not Relaxation

(a) Cave, *ibid.*

(b) Burnet, *ibid.*

enough)

enough) about the End of the *Eighth*, the *Commutation* of Penance began. Instead of the ancient Severities, *vocal Prayers* came to be all that was enjoin'd. So many *Paternosters* stood for so many Days of Fasting; so many *Masses* excus'd from so much Abstinence and Self-denial; and such a Number of Alms-Deeds made an Amends for the want of so much Mortification; 'till, about the Middle of the *thirteenth* Century, such Opinions as these prevail'd-----
(a) That all Penances were *arbitrary*, i. e. depended upon the Will of the Priest, who, in Virtue of the *Keys*, cou'd impose more or less, as he pleased: That what he did impose, if it seem'd painful and troublesome to the Sinner, might be transferr'd to another, substituted to bear the Burden of it: And that, whatever Penance was laid upon the Sinner, if he cou'd not procure a *Substitute*, he was at Liberty to refuse it, in case he was willing to satisfy for that Default in *Purgatory*, from which it was no hard Matter to obtain *Release*; one *Mass* said at a *privileged* Altar (and the Charge of that was not great) wou'd certainly do the Business. Thus were wide Breaches made in the ancient strict Discipline of the Church, and then (as the Pro-

(a) *Preserv. against Popery*, vol. 2. Tit. 8. C. 1.

phet

phet expresses it) (a) one began to build a Wall, just in the Manner, that he liked best, and to others daubed it with untemper'd Mortar; seducing the People, by saying Peace when there was no Peace, and strengthening the Hand of the Wicked, that he shou'd not return from his wicked Way, by promising him Life.

The Na-
ture of
private
Penance.

“ ‘Tis much to be wish'd (says our Church, in her Preface to the *Commination*) that the godly Discipline of the Primitive Times might be restor'd again, whereby such Persons, as stood convicted of notorious Sins, were put to open Penance, and punished in this World, that their Souls might be saved in the Day of the Lord, and that others, admonish'd by their Example, might be more afraid to offend.” But, till this happy *Restoration* can be effected, every Person, that is conscious to himself of great and heinous Offences, must become his own *Penitentiary*, by obliging himself to the Observation of whatever Severities, or *afflictive Duties*, he shall think necessary, in order to subdue the Power and Dominion, which Sin has got over him; such as Mourning, and Weeping, and Fasting, and Watching, and Restraints from Delights, and Labour in the Works of Cha-

(a) *Ezek. xiii. 10, 22.*

city,

tity, and whatever else may conduce to the Humbling of his Nature, and taking Revenge upon those unruly Passions and Appetites, whereby he has offended God.

This is that *private Penance*, which every one is at Discretion to inflict upon himself, and where there is no Occasion for any *Priest* to interfere; only he must take Care, That the *Sorrow* for his past Sins rise above that of *Attrition*, or Fear of future Punishment only, which those of the Church of *Rome* account *sufficient*, and our *Catechist* looks upon as * *an holy and useful* * P. 451. *Disposition*: That he make his *Confession* to his heavenly Father, rather than the *Priest*; because, whatever the other may pretend to, 'tis *God alone that can forgive Sins*: That he make his *Fasting*, (a) *not a bodily Exercise which profiteth little*, but a real Mortification of his carnal Appetites, and a Means to raise his Mind to greater Purity: That he *sanctify* his *Prayers* with inward Devotion, earnest Desires, and warm Affections, and not give God only (b) *the Labour of the Lips, which is the Sacrifice of Fools*: That he bestow his *Alms*, not in a *mercenary Way*, to purchase Pardon for his Sins, but out of a *Principle of Love to God, and his Neighbour*, which alone is *Charity*, and without which,

And its
proper
Ends and
Qualifica-
tions.

(a) 1 Tim. iv. 8.

(b) Eccl. v. 1.

(a) tho' he were to give all his Goods to feed the Poor, he wou'd be nothing: and, in all the other Penitential Offices, which he shall think fit to lay upon himself, that he consider their Purpose and End, which is not to *commute* for Vice, or to *buy off* its Punishment (for no Works of his can do that) but to extinguish the Love of Sin in his Heart, and (b) to *humble himself under the mighty Hand of God, that he may exalt him in due Time.*

*Confession
to be made
to God
only.*

One considerable Part (as I hinted before) wherein the Penance, we inflict upon ourselves, consists, is *Confession* of our Sins, not to the Priest, but to Almighty God; and "the Reason, why God requireth "Confession to be made to him (says the "learned (c) Hooker) is, that thereby testifying a deep Hatred of our own Iniquities, the only Cause of his Hatred and Wrath towards us, we might, because we are humble, be so much the more capable of that Compassion, and tender Mercy, which knoweth not how to condemn Sinners, that condemn themselves." Upon this Assurance, which we every where meet with in Scripture, we have sufficient Encouragement to come unto God, and confess our Transgressions to him, with all their aggravating Circum-

(a) 1 Cor. xiii. 3: (b) 1 Pet. v. 6. (c) Eccl. Pol. p. 311.

stances.

stances. But, in all the sacred Records, where shall we find one Passage, or Example, that obliges us to do the same to the Priest ? (a) A great deal is said in the *New Testament*, concerning Sorrow for Sin, Repentance, and Remission of Sins, &c. but there is not one Word said, nor one Rule given, concerning *Confession* to be made to a *Priest*, or *Absolution* to be given by him.

Our Saviour daily convers'd with Sinners. He reprov'd them, instructed them, heal'd them; pardon'd them, but never brought any of them to such a Confession, as is here intended, *viz.* a particular Enumeration of their Sins, with all their Circumstances; nor, upon so doing, giving them a *formal Absolution*. (b) *He told the Woman of Samaria all things, that ever she did*; but he did not bring her upon her Knees, to make her own Confession; neither did he require it of (c) *the Woman taken in Adultery, even when he had made her Accusers flink away*. During the whole Course of his Ministry, we find no Traces of this Practice; and, if we consult the *Acts* and Administrations of the Apostles, we shall find this Duty (of *absolute Necessity* with some) never so much as mention'd. They went about preaching the

Confession
to the
Priest not
once men-
tion'd in
Scripture.

(a) Burnet on Art. 25. (b) John iv. 29. (c) John viii. 3.

Gospel, calling Men to Repentance, erecting and governing Churches; but they never set themselves down in a *Confessor's Chair*, for *Penitents* secretly to tell them, in *their Ear*, the Story of their vicious Lives. This is a Custom we hear nothing of; and yet, had it been a Business of such mighty Consequence, 'tis strange, that they shou'd omit it. St. James indeed gives us this Injunction--- (a) *Confess your Faults one to another, and pray one for another*; but these are *mutual* good Offices, that have no Relation to the Priest, nor are they requir'd, in order to *Absolution*, but in order to procure the *Intercessions* of other good Men; for which the Apostle gives this Reason, *the effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much.*

Nor founded on *Reason*, because *Absolution* may be given without it.

'Tis pretended indeed, that Men are obliged to make a particular Confession of their Sins, that the *Priest* may come to a true and distinct Knowledge of them, otherwise he cannot exercise the Power of *Absolution*, which Christ, in these Words to his Apostles, (b) *Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted*, has invested them with. Now, tho' some have thought that these Expressions relate to that extraordinary and miraculous Authority, which Christ gave to his Apostles, and to them

(a) James v. 16.

(b) John xx. 23;
only;

only ; (a) yet, at present, we will suppose, that every Christian Priest has an *absolute* and indisputable Power of *forgiving Sins*, but it will not therefore follow, that *private* or *auricular Confession* is necessary for the Exercise of this forgiving Power, because he may forgive Sins, altho' he be not acquainted with the Number and Aggravations of them. Without the Condition of true Repentance indeed, no one can forgive Sins ; but the greatest *Asserters* of *Priestly Authority* will not deny, that, when any Person is truly penitent, the Priest may forgive him ; and, if in this Case, the Priest may forgive him, then private or auricular Confession cannot be necessary in order to Forgiveness. True Repentance (as far as we can conceive the Matter) consists but in these two Things, *a Forsaking of Sin, and a Resolution to live well* ; but to neither of these is it requisite, that the Priest shou'd be acquainted with the Number and Circumstances of the Person's Offences. " If the Priest has fully *explain'd* " his Duty to him ; if he has faithfully in- " form'd him of the *Terms* of the Gospel " Covenant ; if he has laid before him all " the *Rules* of holy Living, that God re- " quires : If, I say, the Priest has done " this, and the Man accepts of these Con-

(a) Bennet against Popery.

L 3

" ditions,

ditions, and resolves to live according to these Rules ; then has the Priest Reason (as far as any Man can think, without knowing his Neighbour's Heart) that the Person is truly penitent ; and, upon that Presumption, is at Liberty to exercise his Power of *Absolution* without any farther Search into the Nature and Number of his Crimes."

The Occasion of *publick* Confession, and how it came to be changed into *private*.

The first *Confessions*, that we meet with in Church History, were occasion'd by the *Apostasies*, which happened about the Time of the *Decian Persecution*, when such, as had offended in that Respect, after a long Course of severe Penance, were admitted at last to make their Confession (which they always did *publickly*) and then were restor'd to the Communion of the Church. These open Confessions however, being, upon several Accounts, found highly inconvenient, (a) the *Bishops*, in most Churches, thought proper to alter them, and to appoint a *publick Penitentiary* (some holy, grave, and prudent *Presbyter*) whose Office it was, to take the Confession of those Sins, which Persons had committed after Baptism ; and, by Prayers, Fastings, and other Exercises of Mortification, to prepare them for *Absolution*. This was the Beginning of *private* Confession to the Priest ;

(a) Cave's Prim. Christ. Part 3. C. 5.

and,

and, for some hundred Years, this Office continued, till, upon (*a*) the Occasion of a notorious Scandal about it, *Nectarius*, then Bishop of *Constantinople*, thought proper to put an End to it (wherein he was followed by many of the other Bishops) and to leave every Man to the Care and Liberty of his own Conscience, how to regulate his Repentance, and prepare himself for the holy Sacrament. Confession however was too *sweet* a *Morsel* for the Church of *Rome* easily to part with; and, tho' she thought not proper to restore the Office of publick *Penitentiaries*, yet she makes each Priest a *Father Confessor*; appoints such to attend the Persons of the greatest and most powerful Princes, and thunders out a Curse against those that do not believe, that *auricular Confession is necessary to Salvation*; whereas, were we inclinable to search into *Antiquity*, we might shew, that, as there are no Footsteps of it in Scripture, (*b*) so the Fathers of the four first Centuries make no mention of it. All that they speak of, is *publick Confession* in the Church; and therefore we find *Erasmus*, who was very well acquainted with their Writings, giving us this Account of the Matter: “ It is evident, says he, that in

(*a*) Vid. *Cave*, *ibid.*—*Hooker*, p. 317, and many others. (*b*) Vid. *Preservat. against Popery*, Tit. 8. C. 1.

Of Penance and

“ St. Jerom’s Time, which was about four
 “ Hundred Years after Christ, there was
 “ no such thing as *secret Confession* in
 “ Use; but the Mistake is, that some few
 “ later and inconsiderable Divines have
 “ taken the Instances of *general* and *PUB-*
 “ *LICK Confession* then practis’d, for Ar-
 “ guments of that *auricular Confession*,
 “ which is now us’d, tho’ quite of a diffe-
 “ rent Nature from it.

The good
and Evil
arising
from pri-
-vate Con-
fession
stated.

Some Cases indeed may happen, where-
 in it may be not only convenient, but
 highly necessary for Men’s Comfort and
 Satisfaction, (a) that they shou’d open their
Grief, and unburthen their Minds to some
discreet and learned Minister of God’s Word,
 who may be supposed to be better acquaint-
 ed with the *Measures of Obedience*, and an
 abler Judge in nice and difficult *Cases of*
Conscience than any *ordinary Man* can be:
 Many and great *Advantages* therefore may
 doubtless accrue from the Use of *Confession*,
 when propos’d (as our *Church* does) as a
Matter of Advice, and not of *Obligation*.
 But, while we are considering these, we
 must likewise reflect on the *Mischiefs*
 that may arise from it, especially supposing
 the greater Part, both of the *Clergy* and
Laity, to be (what they ever were, and
 ever will be) depraved and corrupted.

(a) Vid. our Exhort. to the Communion.

Upon

Upon this Supposition, the *People* will be apt to imagine, (*a*) that the Person, invested with such a Power, is unto them *instead of God*; that their telling their Sins to him is the same thing, as confessing them to God; and that a *gentle* Penance impos'd, and a *speedy* Absolution pronounced by him, is as available to their Forgivenes, as if God himself shou'd, every Day, proclaim their Pardon. Thus, the Remedy being easy, and always at Hand, by the Secrecy, the Multitudes, and Frequency of these Confessions; by the cursory, hypocritical, and evasive Ways of Confessing; by the slight *Penances* impos'd, and the Cheapnes, and even *Prostitution* of *Absolutions* given, the People will be encourag'd to venture more boldly upon the Commission of Sin, and to *work all Manner of Wickedness with Greediness*. Nor can it be difficult to conceive, what Advantages any Priest (especially if he be a bad Man) may be enabled to make, by being thus let into the Secrets and Tempers, and permitted to see the Weaknes, the Passions, and Appetites of all Sorts of People; how easily he may infuse Fears and Scruples into their Minds; make himself *idoliz'd* by some, *formidable* to others, and *capable* of tempting all (if he be so minded)

(*a*) Burnet, *ibid.*

into

into any wicked Action, that best accords with their *Genius*; or of raising any Tribute that he pleases upon them.

And as the Evil appears to be much greater than the Good, the Practice of fences, that stand between God and our it ought to be laid aside.

Since, upon a due Estimate then of the *Good and Evil*, that attend these *private Confessions*, the *Evil* does so far preponderate the *Good*, that they bear no Manner of Proportion to one another: In Of-fences, that stand between God and our Conscience (says (a) the judicious *Hooker*) we may well be allow'd to subscribe to that good Advice, which *St. Chrysostom* gives us, in several Parts of his Homilies: *I wish thee not to bewray thyself publickly, nor to accuse thyself before others. I wish thee to obey the Prophet, who saith, Disclose thy Way unto the Lord, confess thy Offences before him, and tell thy Sins to him, that he may blot them out. I wish thee not to confess them to thy Fellow-Servant, who may upbraid thee with them. Tell them to God, who will cure them. Let him alone see thee at thy Confession; he is the best Physician: Disclose thy Wounds only to him, and desire of him a Medicine.*

(a) *Eccl. Polit.* p. 323.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

Of MONKS and RELIQUES.

THE Church of *Rome* makes many The Pa-
loud Boasts of the several *Religious* pit's and
Orders, wherewith she abounds; of those, Catechist's
who are utterly secluded from the Concerns Sentiments
of this World, and (a) have made themselves concerning-
Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's Sake: ing Monks;
Those, who have voluntarily addicted
themselves to a continued Course of Po-
verty, and (b) count all things in this Life
but *Dung*, that they may win *Christ*: Those,
who are perpetually upon their Knees,
and cease not, *Day and Night*, to make
their Supplications to God, for the For-
giveness of other Men's Sins, more than
their own: And those who, by this Means,
lay up a *Treasure of Merits* for others, and,
by voluntary Poverty, voluntary Sufferings;
and other Acts of *Supererogation*, (b) fill
up that (as they call it) which is behind, of
the *Afflictions of Christ*, in their *Flesh*, for
his *Body's Sake*, which is his *Church*.

Our Catechist perhaps may not affect to go all these Lengths. But, when he sets the *Origin of Monks*ry in so fair a Light, and says so many commendable Things of

(a) Matt. xix. 12.

(b) Phil. iii. 8.

(c) Col. i. 24.

its

* P. 143. its Professors, *viz.* * that they spent their Time in Fasting, and Prayer, and divine Meditation; slept little, watched much, practis'd all Sorts of Virtues, and lived in

† P. 222. perfect Obedience to their Superiors, &c. † when we find him, from our Saviour's Words to the rich Man in the Gospel, *If thou wilt be perfect, (a) sell all that thou hast*, recommending either voluntary Poverty, or such a Perfection in Virtue, as others call *Acts of Supererogation*; and, from (b) St. Paul's Authority, giving so manifest a Preference to the *Celibate*, or unmarried State of Life; we cannot but think him so fond an Admirer of the *Monastick* Orders, as secretly to blame the *Reformation* upon their Account, and to make it sometimes his private Wish, that, once more, they may be establish'd in their ancient Possessions amongst us.

The Difference between *Af-
ceticks*, and *Monks*. The late learned, but (while living) much neglected Mr. Bingham (from whose

Antiquities our *Catechist* has taken his whole Account of the *Origin of Monkery*) (c) tells us, that, all along, in the Christian Church, there were certain Persons, who inur'd themselves to greater Degrees of Abstinence and Fasting, spent more of their Time in Prayer and Devotion, and express'd, in their Lives, more Charity and

(a) Matt. xix. 21. (b) 1 Cor. vii. 8. (c) *Antiq.*
Vol. 1. P. 243, &c.

Contempt of the World, than other Men did, for which they had the Title of *Asceticks*, or Exercisers; and that the Generality of the *Romish* Writers, wherever they meet with *that* Word (as it is not uncommon among the Ancients) immediately lay hold of it, as an Argument to prove the long *Establishment of Monks* in the Christian Church, whereas (a) (according to his *Antiquities*) there is this wide Difference between,---1. *Monks* were Men, who retired from the Business and Conversation of the World, living either in private *Cells* by themselves, or in *Monasteries*, that were on *Mountains*, or in *Deserts*, far remote from Cities; whereas *Asceticks* were Men of an *active* Life, conversing in the most populous Places, like other Men, and in nothing differing from them, except in their attempting to attain to higher Degrees of Christian Perfection. 2. *Monks*, by their first Institution, were only to be *Laymen*, because the *Clerical* and *Monaſtick* Life were, at that Time incompatible; but the ancient *Asceticks* were indifferently Persons of any Order; because the *Clerical* and *Ascetick* Life were not inconsistent with each other. 3. *Monks*, when living in *Monasteries*, and Societies, were always brought under certain *Rules*, and *Laws* of Discipline; whereas the *Asceticks* had no *Laws* to be govern'd by, but only those of the *Gospel*, and of the Church,

(a) Vol. I. p. 245.

where

where they happen'd to live ; which is Proof enough that these were quite different Sorts of Persons, however some may affect to confound them together.

The Rise
and In-
crease of
Monkery.

Asceticks then there were always in the Church ; but the Monastick State (as it is now settled) was never heard of, 'till towards the *fourth Century*. (a) For *two hundred and fifty Years* together, we meet with no *Monks*, but *Asceticks* only. From that Time, to the Reign of *Constantine*, Monachism was confin'd to the *Anchorites*, who lived in *private Cells* in the *Wilderness* ; but, when *Pacomius* had built some *Monasteries* in *Ægypt*, other Countries followed his Example, and thence the Custom prevail'd of living, as *Regulars*, in Societies, in proper Houses, and sometimes *in*, or very near populous Cities ; insomuch that, “ towards the latter End of “ the *fourth Century*, (b) says one, so a-“ mazing was the Increase of the Monas-“ tick Order through all the Parts of the “ Christian World, as makes it reasonable “ to believe, that, in Proportion to the “ Extent of Christendom, greater Num-“ bers of *Monks* were then in the Church, “ than are to be found in it now ; and “ the Reason he gives for this great In-“ crease is----the ardent Zeal of the Prin-

(a) *Bingham*, *ibid.* (b) *Middleton* in his *Introd. Disc.* and *Remarks on the Jesuits Cabal.*

“ cipal Fathers, both of the *Greek* and
 “ *Latin* Church ; who, by writing the
 “ *Lives* of particular Monks, celebrating
 “ their *Sanctity*, and miraculous Gifts,
 “ and founding also Monasteries, where-
 “ ever they came, rais’d the *Solitary State*
 “ to an high Reputation, *an Angelick Insti-*
 “ *tution* (as they lov’d to call it) *the Per-*
 “ *fection of the Christian Life, and the ve-*
 “ *ry Pattern of the Heavenly.*” But, whe-
 “ ther it deserves all these *Encomiums* or no,
 we shall here stop a little and inquire.

To *renounce* the *World*, and *sequester* No Com-
 ourselves from the *Cares* and *Concerns* of mand for
 it, is no where requir’d of us in *Scripture* ; it in Scrip-
 nor is it, in any Degree, a *Perfection* in
 the *Christian Life*. We are commanded
 indeed by the *Apostle*, (a) not to love *the*
World, nor the Things of the World : But
 the *Things of the World* are such, as he,
 who created them, and best understood
 them, hath approv’d, and declar’d to be
good ; such, as we have natural *Appetites*
 and *Inclinations* to ; and such, as minister
 not only to the *Necessities*, but the *Com-*
forts and *Conveniences* of the present *Life* :
 and therefore, there is no *Doubt* to be
 made, but that he, who sent us hither,
 has permitted us a *lawful* *Enjoyment* of
 them ; only he gives us *Caution* in this,
 and other *Admonitions*, not to set our *Af-*

(a) *1 John ii. 15.*

fections

fections on them with any Degree of Immoderation; not to pursue them as our proper Happiness, but ever to possess them with such an Evenness, and Resignation of Mind, as to be willing to part with any, or all of them together, whenever he thinks fit to command them from us, or us from them: And he, who amidst the many Vicissitudes of Life, can so far get the Mastery of his Passions, as, (a) when he weeps, to be as tho' he wept not; when he rejoices, as tho' he rejoiced not; when he buys, as tho' he possessed not; and when he uses this World, as not abusing it, is certainly a greater Man, than he, who absents himself from Life, as soon as he finds Difficulties and Dangers attending it, quits the Post, that Providence has allotted him, and dares not to use the World, for Fear of abusing it.

The active and social Life preferable.

The Troubles and Cares, as well as the Pleasures and Enjoyments of Life, are design'd by God for the Exercise of our Virtues in this State of Probation, and that (b) the Trial of our Faith, being much more precious than of Gold, which perisheth (tho' it be tried with Fire) might be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the Appearing of Jesus Christ. But he, who, being sent into the World for this Purpose,

(a) 1 Cor. vii. 30.

(b) 1 Pet. i. 7.

hastens

hastens out of it again, as soon as he can, or divests himself of its Concerns, while he is forced to continue in it, is like a Soldier, who, being order'd to a Place of some Danger, as soon as he sees the Enemy approaching, deserts his Station, and flees to some Lurking-hole for Safety, (a) but let not that Man think, that he shall receive any Thing of the Lord. The Truth is, God loves an Active Life in all his Creatures, and for this Reason (b) he sendeth the Sluggard to the Ant, to consider her Ways, and be wise. For Men of great Abilities, whether natural or acquir'd, to be useful in their Generations, useful in their publick and private Capacities, useful to their Country, and useful to the Church, whereof they are Members ; and for Men of a lower Condition, to exhibit the Beauty of Religion in the several *Relations* of Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants (which a Monk in his Cloyster cannot do) is more acceptable Service done to God, than whole Days and Nights spent upon our Knees in fervent Prayer ; than any *Hymns*, that the most exalted Understanding can dictate ; or any *Office*, that the most compos'd Affections can perform.

(a) James i. 7.

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(b) Prov. vi. 6.

Whatever

Especially
in the Bu-
siness of
Pastoral
Care.

Whatever Praises therefore may be given to the *Recluseness* and *Celibacy* of the *Monastick* Life, in this the married and more social State has certainly the Pre-eminence, that, by this Means, (a) Men are generally furnish'd with some Measure of Skill in the common Affairs of Life, gain some Insight into Men and Things, and a competent Knowledge of (what is called) *the World*, which gives them a manifest Advantage, especially in the Discharge of the Sacerdotal Office, above those that are under an Obligation of Retirement and Celibacy: and therefore (b) St. *Chrysostom* (as great a *Lover* and *Recommender* of the Solitary State, as he was) " declares it to " be no proper School for those, who " were to be the Leaders of Christ's Flock, " and the Guides of Souls; and thinks " such Persons best qualified for the *Pasto-ral* Charge, who, to Innocence of Life, " have joined so much worldly Experi- " ence and Prudence, as may enable " them, in the Course of their Ministry, " to address themselves to Men, in a Way " suited to their several Exigences and " Tempers, their various Ranks, Condi- " tions, and Characters." So that, upon these Considerations at least, *we may, with-

(a) *Atterbury's Serm.* before the Sons of the Clergy,
Vol. 2. (b) *De Sacerdot.*

out

out Offence, invert the Order of the Apostle's Assertion: *He that marries not, does well, but he that marries, with Regard to the Knowledge of the World* (greatly subservient to the Work of the Ministry) that he gains thereby, may be said to do better.

Whatever Perfection the Church of *Rome*, in Ostentation of her *Holiness*, may place in her *Societies*, which, for God's Sake, choose Poverty, and profess Beggary; (a) yet, as there is Reason to think, that the Men of this Order are only poor *in the World*, but wealthy *when they are out of it* (as they love to speak) i. e. when they are gotten within their own *Monasteries* and *Peculiars*; so their shutting themselves *up* in Religious Houses, and begging the Alms and Contributions of others, when they are *out* of them, can never answer the Profession of Poverty, if, all the While, they live at Ease, and want nothing; because, between Poverty, and an easy Enjoyment of Wealth, there is certainly a wide Difference. But suppose they are really in Want, and as poor and indigent, as, by their Profession of *Beggary*, they pretend to be; yet this voluntary Poverty of theirs can be no *Perfection*, but a vain *Superstition* only; because there

*Voluntary
Poverty a
vain Su-
perstition,
not re-
quir'd in
Scripture.*

(a) Clagget's Serm. Vol. 2.

is no Scripture Precept or Example to give it the least Countenance. Our Saviour indeed told the young Man, (a) that came, and enquir'd of him the Way to *eternal Life*, *If thou wilt be perfect, go, and sell all that thou hast, and give it to the Poor.* But the only Inference, that can be made from hence, in Behalf of voluntary Poverty, is this---That the Disciples of Christ must choose to relinquish all, that they are worth in the World, rather than renounce their Profession, and depart from their Duty to God: But this is nothing at all to the Case of the several Orders of *Mendicants* in the *Romish Church*.

And not capable of meriting any thing for others. Whatever Notions these Orders may have of their doing something *meritorious*, in Behalf of other Christians, by their obliging themselves to this painful and ignominious Course of Life; since the Law of God is, in every Part, perfect; and requires of us an Integrity of good Works; since we are commanded (b) to *love him with all our Souls, and with all our Strength*; and that Love requires the Performance of all Manner of Goodness, there cannot possibly be, in the very best of Men, any Room for *Supererogation*: because, do we what we can (as our Sa-

(a) Matt. xix. 16.

(b) Luke x. 27.

vious

viour tells us) we are still but (a) unprofitable Servants, and have performed no more than what was our Duty to do. St. Paul, speaking of himself, as well as other Christians, tells us expressly, that (b) we are not sufficient of ourselves to think, much less to act, any thing as of ourselves, but all our Sufficiency is of God, and therefore we cannot suppose, that he ever cou'd entertain a Conception of its being in his Power to make any *Addition* to the *Fund* of Christ's Merits, or, of himself, to do any thing, that cou'd be available to the Salvation of others; but his only Meaning in that difficult Passage to the (c) *Colossians* is this---That, as Christ is related to his Church, as the *Head* is to the Members, and, as the Afflictions of his Members are (d) styled the Persecutions and Afflictions of Christ himself: “ (e) Of these Afflictions which “ belong to Christ's Members I (says the “ Apostle) have already had a Share, and “ go on to fill up the Residue of what “ God has appointed me to suffer in my “ Flesh, in Discharge of my Ministry, for “ the Benefit and Edification of his “ Church.” For the *Sufferings of Christ*, (says an (f) ancient Annotator, are to be taken in a double Sense; in one, for those

(a) Luke xvii. 10. (b) 2 Cor. iii. 5. (c) Ch. i. v. 24.
(d) Acts ix. 4, 5. (e) Whitby in *Locum*. (f) *Lyranus*.

which he underwent in his own Body, in which there remaineth nothing to be fulfill'd : In the other, for those which, to the End of the World, he is to suffer in his Mystical Body, and of these there remain many Residues to be filled up ; because Christians, in all Ages, are destin'd to suffer, and many Times for Righteousness Sake. This seems to be a true Interpretation of the Passage before us : For that the Apostle, who had the lowest Opinion imaginable of his own Performances, who, (a) tho' he labour'd more abundantly than all the rest, yet thought himself not meet to be called an Apostle ; much less that a Company of *Drones*, either lurking in *Hives* to consume the Honey, that others have gather'd ; or, under Pretence of Poverty, swarming every where round the Country, to plunder (as one may call it) or exact *Contributions*, shou'd ever be capable of adding any thing to the infinite Merits of *Jesus Christ*, is an impious *Paradox*, bordering upon Blasphemy. But to continue their History.

A Continuation of the History of Monks until the Reformation.

(b) At the first Erection of *Monasteries*, they having no standing Revenues belonging to them, all Monks whatever were obliged to exercise themselves in bodily Labour, partly to avoid being burdensome to others, and partly to keep their Souls

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10.

(b) Bingham, ibid. p. 257.

well

well guarded, and out of the Way (as it were) of Satan's Temptations. Then was the Time, when there appeared rare Examples of Self-denial and Abstinence, of Piety and Virtue, and all other commendable Qualities, in these Places of *Retirement*, (a) which, in a short Time, became Schools of Learning, for the pious and religious Education of Youth, as well as Nurseries for the Church.

It must not be dissembled however, that, even in this Period of Time, there were some Sorts of Monks, who were a *Scandal* and Reproach to their Order. Such were (b) the *Sarabaitæ*, who, living not in the Wilderness (as the Manner then was) but in populous Cities, where every Thing they did, might be seen and admir'd, affected a vain Singularity in their Dress; went about fighing and groaning perpetually; and, tho' they sometimes fasted to an extraordinary Degree, yet, on every *Feast-Day*, were sure to indulge themselves in Riot and Excess: And such were (c) the *Gyrovagi*, or rambling Monks, who spent their whole Life in running about from one Province to another, and getting themselves well entertain'd, for three or four Days together, at every *Cell* they came to; were arrant Slaves to their Bellies, and intirely addicted

(a) *Ibid.* p. 249, and 265. (b) *P. 247.* (c) *P. 251.*

to the Pleasures of Sense. With these few Exceptions, however, the *Generality* of Monks, in those Days, lived unexceptionably, while they continued in a State of Poverty; but, when once large Estates and Revenues came to be settled upon them, their Severity of Life, their exemplary Virtue, and Fervency of Devotion began to abate, till about the Beginning of the tenth Century, when an universal Corruption overspread the Christian Church, *Monasteries*, by the Introduction of an Affluence of Riches, and, with Riches, Idleness, and Luxury, took the Infection, and in Process of Time, *viz.* in the Fifteenth Century, *instead of being the Sanctuaries of God* (as one (a) expresses it) *became Receptacles of lascivious young Men*; even as Nunneries were the abominable *Stews of Venus*, which gave a just Offence to all sober Christians, and, among other Abuses of that Time, was a powerful Incitement to bring about the *Reformation*, which (however it might carry the Edge of its Resentment too far in some particular Instances) in *this* it cannot but deserve Commendation, (b) that it has freed us from a Race of Men, whose insufferable Sloth, and insatiable Avarice, dissolute Lives, and foul Impurities brought

(a) Bernard in Convers. Sancti Pauli Serm.

(b) Vid. Burnet's Hist. of the Reformation.

Scandal upon the sacred Function, and made the Offering of the Lord to be abhorred.

Tho' the Council of Trent only declares, that (a) the Reliques of Saints are to be had in Veneration, without determining the Degree; yet, as the World had, for many Ages, entertain'd an high Opinion of them, and those of the Romish Communion, in particular, immoderately doated upon them, were wont to kiss, and worship them, to serve them with Lights and Incense, to use them as sacred Charms, and to attribute to them the Power of working Miracles, &c. the Council supposed, that it might safely leave them under this Prepossession, without pretending to decree any Thing farther concerning them. Our Catechist perhaps might not have all this Veneration for Reliques; but, when he represents the Practice of the primitive Church, as paying these excessive Honours to departed Saints and Martyrs, * carefully preserving the * P. 146. Remains of their Bodies, embalming and wrapping them up in rich Cloaths, and gathering up the very Drops of their Blood; making the Days of their Martyrdom Festivals; meeting them together at their Tombs, where God vouchsaf'd many Times to work Miracles, and where the Custom was, to

(q) Popish Creed, Art. 20.

read

read over their *Acts*, and the History of their Sufferings; he certainly leads his unwary Reader into an high Conceit of the Sanctity of such Reliques, and, from the Authority of the Primitive Church, induces him to believe, that there is no Sin or Superstition in adoring them.

No Reverence paid to Reliques at first.

We acknowledge indeed, (a) that great Respect is due to the Bodies of Saints, which were once the *Temples of the Holy Ghost*; nor can we wonder, that Christians, in the first Fervour of their Zeal, believing the Resurrection, as firmly as they did, and having an high Sense of the Honour done to Christ, and his Religion, by the Sufferings of *Martyrs*, endeavour'd to collect their Bones and Ashes together, and to bury them decently; but more than this we do not find they did. *Stephen* was the first Martyr, that we have in Christian Story, and the Manner of his Death was so very violent, that much of his Blood, and many of his fractur'd Bones, might have been got together, and preserv'd, if the Humour of Christians, at that Time, had run that Way: But all that we read of him, after he expir'd, or (as the Text expresses it) *fell asleep*, is, (b) that devout Men carried him to his Burial, and made great Lamentation over him: They gave him a

(a) *Burnet on the Art.*

(b) *Acts viii. 2.*

decent

decent Funeral, and, at the Place of his Interment, no doubt, bewailed the cruel and undeserved Fate of so excellent a Person, and zealous Champion of the Christian Faith, but no more.

When *Ignatius*, Bishop of *Antioch*, was expos'd to the wild Beasts in the Amphitheatre at *Rome*, such of his Bones, as were not devour'd, his Friends carried to *Antioch*, there wrapped them up in Linnen, and esteem'd them as a very great Treasure. And when *Polycarp*, Bishop of *Smyrna*, not many Years after, was burnt alive, the Christians of that City took Care to gather up his Ashes, and to deposit them in a proper Place, where they intended to keep a yearly Commemoration of the *Birth-day* of his *Martyrdom*; but, that they meant no more than this, is manifest from their Declaration, as it is preserv'd (a) by *Eusebius*: “We worship Christ, say they, “as being the Son of God; but the *Martyrs* we love, as justly we shou'd, for “the Sake of their stedfast and unshaken “Affection to their King and Master, of “whose Happiness, God grant, that we “may partake, and learn by their Ex-“ ample.”

In an Age or two after this, we find no Characters of any other Respect paid to

(a) *Eccl. Hist.* L. 4. C. 15.

But in suc-
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the Bones and Bodies of Saints ; but that they laid them quietly in their Graves, and met *annually* at their Tombs, to praise God for their Magnanimity, and to excite themselves to a generous Imitation of them : But when the Times of Persecution were over, and the *Roman Empire* was become *Christian*, a Fondness of having and keeping the Reliques of Saints began to spread itself in many Places, and thereupon a gainful Trade ensued of procuring, and selling them to such, as were *Superstitious* enough to think that there was a secret Virtue in them, or *fond* enough to imagine, that Miracles might possibly be done by them ; (a) as the Writings of the Fathers toward the *fourth Century*, particularly of St. *Basil*, St. *Ambrose*, St. *Austin*, and St. *Jerom* seem to lay the Foundation for such a Conceit ; unless, in respect to these great Men, we are rather inclinable to suspect, that many Things of this Kind might be foisted into their Works in the following Ages, which was no uncommon Thing ; and, with Regard to St. *Austin* more especially, we have the greater Reason to believe it, because we find him complaining, that, (b) *in his Time*, there were a great many wandering idle Monks, who, by the Instigation of Satan, went about the

(a) *Burnet* on *Art. 22.* (b) *De Oper. Monach.* C. 28.

World,

World, selling Reliques of Martyrs (whether of true Martyrs or no, it answer'd their Purpose as well) we have Reason to believe, I say, that he, who entertain'd so low a Conception both of Reliques, and the Venders of them, wou'd never have recorded it in one of his most (a) remarkable Pieces, " that, at *Milan*, while he himself was present, the Reliques of the Martyrs, *Protasius* and *Gervasius*, which lay buried in a Place unknown, but was reveal'd to St. *Ambrose* in a Dream, did openly, and in the Sight of all the People, merely by a Touch, restore a blind Man to his Sight."

However this be, (b) when once Superstition is suffer'd to mix with Religion, it will still be gaining Ground, and knows no Bounds. The Body of St. *Stephen*, (c) about the Beginning of the fourth Century, being by a Revelation from Heaven (as we are told) discover'd, was, in a short Time, distributed about in little *Fragments*, and *Chapels* or *Oratories* built for their Reception, where they are said to have wrought many surprising Miracles; and, as the Success of the first Martyrs Remains was so very considerable, (d) it prov'd a Temptation to Men of all Orders, to make

To a very
excessive
Degree.

(a) *De Civit. Dei* L. 22. C. 2. (b) *Burnet*, *ibid.*
(c) *Middleton's Pref.* to his *Remarks*. (d) *Bingham*, *ibid.*

what

what Collections they cou'd of this kind; even by robbing of Graves, and stealing away the Bones of Saints, or of any others, that wou'd bring them in Money; for which Reason there was a Law of *Theodosius the Great*, " that no one should sell, " or buy the Reliques of Martyrs; but " that, if any Man was minded to build a " Church over the Place, where the *Martyr* was buried, to be dedicated to God " and his Service, and not for any Religious Worship of the *Martyr* himself, " he might have Liberty to do it." But all this wou'd not restrain the Madness of succeeding Ages, which, by *Legends*, and *Lying Wonders*, was rais'd to such a Degree of *Enthusiastick Zeal* at last, that every thing belonging to the Saint or Martyr, his Dust and Ashes, rotten Teeth, and rotten Bones, a Rag of his Cloaths, or any little Utensil known to be his, was not only held in the highest *Veneration*, but made the Object of Religious Worship, many Ages before the Reformation; and so continues still to be, wherever the same *Infatuation*, which, at first, set this *Idolatry* on Foot, is permitted to continue, and that is through *four* Parts in *five* of the Whole Christian World. Strange and unaccountable! how such a Number of Men shou'd be so far besotted, as to pay that Adoration to their *Remains*, which the Saints themselves,

Tho' utterly inconsistent with Reason and Scripture.

selves, when here upon Earth (as in the Case (a) of *Barnabas* and *Paul*) refus'd the Offer of, with so much Abhorrence ; and yet how *dead Reliques* come to be more Holy, than living Saints, 'tis past the Reach of human Understanding, one wou'd think, to comprehend.

Thus we have look'd into some of the chief of our *Catechist's Doctrines* ; and, upon Examination, have found him a-
scribing to the Church an absolute *Infal-
libility*, both in Doctrine and Practice ;
setting up *Tradition* in *Derogation* to the
Scriptures, which he passes by in Silence ;
pleading the *Necessity* and *Immutability*
of the most trifling Ceremonies, where
once they are received ; and multiplying
Sacraments, even beyond the *Popish Stan-
dard* : In the Administration of Baptism,
crouding in a Number of senseless Ac-
tions and Gestures, and making the Lord's
Supper an Institution utterly unintelligi-
ble ; asserting (as one (b) has observ'd
before me) " a propitiatory Sacrifice of the
" Body and Blood of Christ in the Office
" of the Eucharist, Purgatory for the
" Punishment of the Dead, and Prayers
" for the Relief and Repose of their Souls ;
" Exorcisms, Chrisms, consecrated Oil,
" the Sign of the Cross, Penances, private

(a) *Acts* xiv. 15.

(b) *Middleton*, *ibid.*

" *Confessions*,

“ Confessions, Absolutions, Reliques ;
“ Monks, the Preference of the Single
“ above the married Life ; in short, al-
“ most every thing, that is now profess’d,
“ and practis’d in the *Romish* Church,
“ except the *universal Supremacy of the*
“ *Pope*, which is disputed by the *Papists*
“ themselves ; the *Divine Worship of*
“ *Saints*, which they also *disallow*, or en-
“ deavour to *evade* ; and *absolute Transub-*
“ *stantiation* ; towards which however he
“ has gone as far, as he cou’d possibly do,
“ without forfeiting the Name of a *Pro-*
“ *testant.*” So that, upon the Whole,
we may pronounce of his Performance (so
far as we have hitherto examin’d it) that it
is nothing else, but a Species of *Popery*,
cover’d with some *Phrases*, or Modes of
Diction, that are a little more plausible,
and endeavouring to conceal itself under a
very thin and transparent Disguise : and, to
make this Assertion still more evident, it
may not be improper, here, to draw a *Pa-*
“ *rallel* between them, in order to shew their
near *Affinity*, by the natural Similitude of
their *Features.*

The ROMANIST declares. The CATECHIST asserts.

THAT the Church is infallible in her Decrees, and Deter-
minations, and the on-
ly Judge of the true Sense and Interpretation of Scripture. Popish
Creed, Art. 14.

THAT whatever the Church ap-
points, is of the same Au-
thority with the Scrip-
tures, and that all Inter-
pretations of Scripture, not conformable to what
has been receiv'd, are to
be rejected. P. 143.

II. **T**hat Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions, under the Name of A-
ctions, and the Rest of *postulic* Tradition, with the Observances, and is so called by the Fan-
Constitutions of *ab*h*ether* others (be it a Custom
Church, ought to be or Usage never so in-
admitted and embrac'd. *vial*) ought to be es-
Art. 12. *ton at ii and* *dictum* *you to tow* *T*Scriptures, as coming
oblig. *val et revendw* *from the same Fountain.*
P. 34, 197, 219.

201

III.

V That the Scriptures are no adequate Rule of Faith, but, Tradition being once esta-
blish'd, the Church is provided with a cer-
tain N.

V That, as the Apostles taught, for most Part, by Word of Mouth, the main of their Doctrine and Practice was preserv'd by

The ROMANIST declares. The CATECHIST asserts.

tain and infallible Rule by *Tradition only*, and for their Interpretation. *Vid. Bellarmin. de Verbo Dei non Scripto.* that all Interpretations of Scripture, contrary thereto, ought to be rejected. *P. 142, 143.*

IV. IV.

That there are truly and properly *seven Sacraments* of the new Law; Baptism, Confirmation, the Lord's Supper, Penance, extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony; and that he receives and admires the receiv'd and approv'd Rites of the Catholick Church, in Sick, the solemn Administration of all the Sacra-ments before mention'd. *Art. 15.*

That there are twelve Sacraments, two greater, viz. Baptism and the Eucharist, and ten lesser, five of which belong to Baptism; and these he holds to be necessary: and the other five are the Sign of the Cross, Imposition of the Hands, Unction of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony: and that it is not in the Power of any Church whatever to lay aside these. *P. 228, &c. 224, 195.*

III.

III.

V.

V.

That, in the Sacra-ment of the Lord's Supper, the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ is really, truly, of the Holy Ghost, the and very

The ROMANIST declares. The CATECHIST asserts.

and substantially present; and that the whole Substance of the Bread is turned into the Body, even as the whole Substance of the Wine is turned into the Blood.

Art. 17.

III.

very Body and Blood of Christ, not by Way of Type and Figure, but in Power and Reality, and, as far as it is possible for any thing to be made another, without Change of Substance. P. 266, &c.

VI.

That, in the Mass, there is offer'd a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead.

Art. 17.

That, at the first Institution of the Eucharist, under the Pledges of Bread and Wine, Christ offer'd himself a true and proper Sacrifice unto God, which, being continu'd by the Priest, is beneficial to the Dead as well as the Living. P. 268.

273, 341.

VII.

That, in the holy Sacrament, the consecrated *Hoſt* may be carried about in Processions, according to the laudable and universal Manner and Custom of

the N 2

VII.

That, in ancient Times, it was usual for Christians to reserve some Part of the Eucharist, and either carry it home with them, send it to such as were absent,

the N 2

The ROMANIST declares. The CATECHIST affirms.

the Church, or publicly set before the People, that it may be ador'd by them. *Concil. Trident. Sess. 13. Can. 6.*

VIII.

That he firmly believes, there is a Purgatory, or a certain Place after Death, where in the Souls of such, as are liable to *temporal* Punishment, shall be detain'd, until they be purg'd, or purified from the Guilt of their Sins; and that the Souls, thus detain'd in this Place, are greatly helped by the Prayers of the Faithful. *Art. 19.*

IX.

That Penance is a Sacrament instituted by Christ, and necessary to Salvation; and that whoever shall say, that in this Sacrament, pri-

sent, or give it to Infants, imagining, that, in Virtue of our Lord's Institution, it might in some Manner be profitable to them. *P. 371, 343.*

VIII.

That, as the Saints in Paradise pray for us, so ought we to pray for the Faithful departed in *Hades*; because our Prayers may prevail, that some lesser Failings, and some Faults, for which they might otherwise suffer in the *Conflagration*, may be passed over. *P. 164.*

IX.

That, as the Soul and Body have sinned together, so shou'd they suffer together, and submit to those *afflictive Duties*, which go under the

The ROMANIST declares. The CATECHIST asserts.

vate Confession to the the Name of Penance; Priest only is not neces- and if, at any Time, sary to the Forgiveness Men are in Trouble of of Sins, but a mere hu- Conscience from the man Invention, and Pressure of their Sins, contrary to the Institu- or find any Difficulty in tion and Command of their R^epentance, they Christ, let him be ac- ought to make their cursed. *Art. 15. and Confession to the Priest, Concil. Trident. Sess. 14. Can. 6, 7.*

who, by his Skilfulness, is able to take Care of their Cure. *P. 403—4, and 415.*

X.

X.

That, as the Reliques That, as the Re-
of Saints and Martyrs mains of the Bodies of
ought to be had in Ve- Martyrs (at whose
neration, i. e. highly es- Tombs God was pleas'd
teem'd and worshipped; frequently to work Mi-
so the Order of Monks, racles) were, by the Pri-
who renounce the mitive Christians, care-
World, spend their fully preserv'd, and the
Time in Fasting and very Drops of their
Prayer, and devote Blood gather'd up; so
themselves to voluntary the Monks, who confin'd
Poverty, and a State of themselves to a single
Celibacy, for the King- Life, and spent their
dom of Heaven, deserve Time in Acts of Piety,
the Praise, which the and Divine Contem-
Ancients gave them, of plation, who lived spa-
being the Flower and most ringly, prayed much,
precious Stone among all slept but little, and ex-

The ROMANIST declares. The CATECHIST asserts,

the Ornments of the ~~ercis'd~~ *themselves con-*
Church. *Art. 20.* & *tinually in all Sorts of*
Hieron Op. Tom. 4. *Virtues, were held in*
Part 2. 551. *great Esteem, and, in*
a short time, multiplied
exceedingly. P. 146,
148.

I might carry the Comparison much farther, but, from this short *Diagram*, it appears, how near the Resemblance is between their respective Doctrines: And indeed, upon Examination, I found them so *inseparably* united, that I was obliged to take and answer them both together, which has made me more prolix upon these *Topicks*, than I otherwise wou'd have been; but (to make my Reader some Amends for this) I promise to be more concise in the rest, and so proceed to such of our *Catechist's Assertions*, as I call *dubious.*

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

Of some DUBIOUS Doctrines.

OUR Catechist informs us, * that Hades being divided into two Mansions, whereof that, to which the Righteous are assign'd, is called Abraham's Bosom, or Paradise; and that, where the Souls of the Wicked are lodg'd, Tartarus, or Hell: It is a probable Opinion, countenanc'd by very good Authorities, that our Saviour's Soul went to Tartarus, or the Mansion of the Wicked, not to suffer any Pain or Punishment, but to preach his Gospel to some Prisoners there, whom he thought to be proper Objects of his Mercy. Hades in the Greek, indeed, is a Word of very extensive Signification. It means, in general, any Place, that is *bidden* and *invisible* to us; but, besides this, it denotes sometimes the *Grave*, sometimes the *State of the Dead*, sometimes the *infernal Regions*, sometimes the *Torments* that are there endur'd, and sometimes a *Place* appointed for the Reception of Souls, during the Time of their *Separation* from their Bodies, until the general Resurrection: and hence arises such a Variety of Opinions concerning our Lord's *Descent*, and the particular Place, to which his Soul, after its Dissolution from the

* P. 157.
CHRIST'S
DESCENT
INTO
HELL,
and the
Catechist's
Notion
of it.

The two
principal
Opinions
concern-
ing it.

Body, thought proper to retreat. The two principal are these, 1. That our Saviour's human Soul, after its Separation from his Body, went immediately to *Tartarus*, or the Habitation of the Damn'd, there to suffer, to conquer, to triumph, to release some, to translate others, or (as this Writer has it) to *preach his Gospel to such as might deserve it*. 2. The other Opinion is, That his Soul, upon its Separation by Death, retir'd to the Place appointed for the common *Receptacle* of departed Spirits, and into that particular *Mansion* of it, which is set apart for the Accommodation of the Righteous; for so he told the penitent Thief:

(a) *To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

That
which the
Catechist
chuses, re-
futed.

Our Catechist has made Choice of the former of these Opinions, in Conformity to others, more than his own Judgment, one wou'd think; since, to every considering Man, it cannot but be some *Prejudice* against Christ's LITERAL Descent into Hell, that we find no Mention of it in the History of his Gospel; and yet it is hardly conceivable, (b) how so memorable a Transaction, as this, cou'd have been passed over in Silence by the *Evangelists*, and other sacred Writers, without giving us the least *Hint* of it; especially when, in treating of his Death, Burial, and Resurrection,

(a) Luke xxiii. 43.

(b) Burnet on Art. 3.

it laid so fairly in their Way, that they cou'd scarce have escaped it, had there been any thing of Truth and Reality in it. It is no small Prejudice against this Opinion likewise, That Christ's Descent into Hell is mention'd by no Author on the Creed, before *Ruffinus*, about the Beginning of the fifth Century, and that too to denote his *Burial* only, which had been omitted in the preceding Clauses: That, before that Time, it had no Place in any Symbols either of the *Eastern* or western Churches; and That, in the short *Abstracts* which *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens*, and *Origen* give us of the Christian Faith, they take no Manner of Notice of it. So that, as its Use, in the *Apostles Creed*, is neither very ancient nor universal, it is much to be wish'd, that the Rulers of our Church, (a) who have Authority in Matters of Faith, wou'd, some Way or other, correct the Translation of the Word *HELL* in her Articles, which widely deviates from the Sense of the *Original*; by its daily Repetition in the Creed leads the *Vulgar* into Misconceptions; is understood in another Manner by the *Learned*; gives Offence to serious and well-affected Christians, and an unlucky Handle for the Defence of a *Purgatory*, or a *Lim-*

(a) Art. 20.

bus Patrum, to such as contend for its literal Acceptation.

And the ~~Reason he gives for it, set aside.~~ Of all the various *Ends*, that are commonly assign'd for Christ's *Going into Hell*, our *Catechist* has singled out but one, and that, in my Opinion, the most improper of any, tho' founded (as he supposes) upon the Words of St. Peter, (a) who, speaking of Christ, *as being put to Death in the Flesh*, tells us, that he was quickened by the Spirit, *by which also he went and preached unto the Spirits in Prison*, i. e. according to him, in *Tartarus*. But herein he mistakes the Apostle's Meaning, who never mentions Christ's human Soul, but only the *Spirit*, or (b) Power of his *Divinity*, whereby he was *raised from the Dead*, and whereby *he went and preached unto the Spirits in Prison*. Now if by this Prison (c) we may properly enough understand the *Bondage and Captivity of Sin and Satan*, as is evident from the Words being us'd frequently (especially by the (d) *Evangelical Prophet*) in that Sense; and if the particular *Spirits in Prison* (e) were the *Antediluvian People*, as is manifest from the Apostle's Description of them, *viz.* that they were *disobedient*, i. e. extremely wicked

(a) 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19. (b) 2 Cor. xiii. 4. (c) Whitby in Locum. (d) Isaiah xlvi. 7. Ch. xlvi. 9. Ch. i. 1, 2. (e) Pearson on the Creed. Art. 2, and 5.

(as (a) the sacred History informs us) That they liv'd (b) *in the Days of Noah*, and in the Time, *when the Ark was preparing*, then have we the Apostle's Meaning in that abstruse Text. For, tho' it is certain, that our Lord, being then *in the Bosom of his Father*, did not appear upon Earth to preach *personally* to this old Generation of Sinners; yet this he might do (c) either (d) by *Enoch the seventh from Adam*, who was a Prophet, or (e) by *Noah the tenth*, who was a Preacher of Righteousness, both endued with his divine Spirit; and what he thus did by their Ministry will bear the same Construction, as if he had done it himself. So that upon the Whole it appears, that the true Meaning of the Passage now before us is this— “ That by the Ministry of the same Spirit, by which our Saviour was quicken'd, and rose from the Dead, which was no other, than the *Holy Ghost*, he preached to those, that were disobedient, or impious, before the Flood; but, because they did not repent upon this Preaching, but, by their obstinate Wickedness, abus'd both that, and likewise the *Long-suffering of God*, they are now in Hell, past all Hopes of Redemption;” and therefore

(a) Gen. vi. 5, 6, 13. (b) 1 Pet. iii. 20. (c) Whitby in Locum, and Pearson in the Notes, Art. 2. (d) Jude ver. 14. (e) 2 Pet. ii. 5.

it is incongruous to suppose, that Christ went down thither, to preach his Gospel to such, as, of all others, were the most undeserving of so peculiar a Favour, and to whom (had they been vouchsafed it) all Preaching wou'd have been in vain ; because, as the Days after Death were never made for Opportunities of a better Life, their Fate was become irreversible, and upon them was that final Decree pass'd, (a) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; be, that is filthy, let him be filthy still.*

That,
which he
refuses,
prov'd to
be right,
and some
Reasons
assign'd
for it.

But now, in the other Opinion, *viz.* That Christ's Soul, upon its Separation from his Body, passed into those Mansions of Rest, which are prepar'd for the Reception of the Righteous, until the Consumptionation of all Things ; there is nothing inconsistent either with Scripture or Reason ; and, in the suppos'd *Ends* of it, nothing absurd, or incongruous to the *Analogy of Faith.* (b) For, since our blessed Saviour's Soul, when disunited from his Body, was, of Necessity, to go somewhere, and there remain, 'till the Time of its Returning to the Body, where cou'd that be, but to that Place, where departed Spirits are accustomed to resort ; and, as his Soul was the most *pure* and *innocent* one, that ever visited the *Regions of Death*,

(a) Rev. xx. 11:

(b) Stackhouse on the Creed.

to what Society of Spirits shou'd it go, but to the *Blessed*, who lived in Expectation of a joyful Resurrection? And therefore we may well suppose, that, to give those holy Men, who died before his *Manifestation in the Flesh*, and had so passionate a Desire to see him, the Satisfaction of Enjoying his Presence for a while, to conform himself to the *Laws* of human Nature; and that, knowing what it is to be a separate Soul, he might thence learn to pity us, when we come to die, and, upon our Passage into a State of *Disunion*, to provide for our Repose, until our Resurrection; and to support the Spirits of all good Men with these consolatory Thoughts upon the Approach of their Dissolution.—

“ That Death doth not put an End to their Being; but only translates them to a Place, where the *Captain* of their *Salvation* has been before them, to secure their Passage, and, by his Example, to ascertain their Return;” These and such like, I say, may well be suppos'd to be the *Ends* of Christ's Descent into *Hades*; that as he has (a) *tasted Death* for every *Man*, so, in all other Things, he might be (b) *made like unto his Brethren*, *Sin only excepted*.

(a) *Heb. ii. 9.*

(b) *Verse 17.*

* P. 204. II. Our Catechist looks upon * *Abstinence from eating of Blood, not only as a Command of the Church, but an Injunction likewise given by God himself to Noah, repeated to Moses, and ratified by the Apostles*; and, consequently, what ought to be observ'd by all Men, until a Dispensation can be produc'd from God. The only Question then, says he, is, whether there is any Permission for eating Blood under the Gospel; but so far from this, that the contrary was establish'd by a solemn Decision of the Apostles, expressly declaring the joint Determination of the Holy Ghost in this Point; which the Church of God, not only in the first and purest, but even in the darkest Ages of it, did observe and keep. But, in Answer to this, we may observe, that, as the principal Character of the Christian Religion is, that it frees us from the Observation of the Law of Moses, and is in itself a reasonable Service, debarring us from the Use of nothing, that has no Moral Turpitude in it, or is not beneath the Condition of a Man, that has the Revelation of a glorious and immortal Life to come; so are we not affected with what Prohibitions were given to Noah, or Moses, concerning the Eating of Blood, provided we can but stand clear of the Decree (the first Decree, that was made in the Christian Church) in Relation to this Matter; and this we certainly may,

if

THE PRO-
HIBI-
TION OF
EATING
BLOOD,
and the
Catechist's
Opinion
of it.

if I can but make it appear, " That this Decree is so far from binding all Christians, at all Times, that it never related to any Christians at all, but such only, as became Converts to Christianity, from having been *Proselytes of the Gate* (as the Jews called them) and to them only, as long as the Jewish Polity lasted"; and this I shall endeavour to do by considering the *Nature* and *Intent* of the Decree, and the particular Persons, to whom it was address'd.

The Decree is this—*(a) It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater Burden, than these necessary Things; that ye abstain from Meats offer'd to Idols, and from Blood, and from Things strangled, and from Fornication, from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.* *(b) The learned Dr. Spencer, in a Dissertation upon this Subject, has explain'd the Substance of the Decree in this Manner—* By *Things offer'd to Idols* we may understand any Meat, or Drink, devoted, or offer'd to an Image or Idol, but such especially as had been offer'd in the Idol's Temple: By *Blood*, that, which was separated from the Flesh (as in all *larger* Beasts) and either drunk by itself, or mingled with other Liquors, and so swallow'd down, in Honour of the

(a) Acts xv. 28, 29. (b) Lib. de Leg. Heb. Rit. in Pref.

Idol:

Idol: By *Things strangled*, all *lesser* Creatures, Fowls, Birds, Hares, Rabbets, &c. that were put to Death in this Manner, with a Design to keep the Blood in them in order to be eaten: And by *Fornication*, Uncleanness of all Kinds, and such especially as the Heathens made a Part of the Religious Worship, paid to their Idols. So that the Prohibition of these four Things, which were the usual Concomitants of Idolatry, was to secure these Heathen Converts of *Antioch* from Relapsing, as well as from giving Offence to Jewish Converts, by reminding them of what it was, that they renounc'd when they became *Profelytes of the Gate*, and were still oblig'd to renounce, now that they were become *Christians*.

The Persons to whom it was direct-ed, viz. converted *Profelytes of the Gate*. To explain this a little more, we must observe, that (a) among the Jews there were two Sorts of *Profelytes*, the *Profelytes of Justice*, and the *Profelytes of the Gate*. The *Profelytes of Justice* were those, who, being converted from Paganism, were, by Baptism, Sacrifice, and Circum-cision, initiated into the Jewish Church, and took upon them the Observance of the whole Jewish Law. (The *Profelytes of the Gate* were likewise Gentiles by Birth, who renounc'd the Heathen Religion indeed,

(a) *Prideaux's Cabbalist*, Part 2, Book 5. A

but did not embrace the *Jewish*. They were permitted (however to live among the *Jews*, and within the *same Gates* (from whence they had their Name) and were allowed several Privileges, on Condition of their observing the Laws of *Society*, and such particular Injunctions, as *Moses* had made concerning them. Of this Sort of Proselytes *Naaman* the *Syrian*, and *Cornelius* the *Centurion* are supposed to be: and that the Converts at *Antioch* (upon whose Account this Decree was made) were of the same Kind, we learn from *Josephus*, (a) who tells us, that, in this City, there was a famous *Jewish University*, and that it was filled with *Proselytes of the Gate*.

How these *Proselytes* came to be converted to Christianity, we have this Account in the *Acts of the Apostles*, viz. That (b) St. *Peter*, by a Revelation from Heaven having converted the *Proselyte Cornelius* to the Christian Faith, and (c) justified himself before the *Elders* at *Jerusalem* for so doing, this gave Encouragement to others, when, upon St. *Stephen's Persecution*, they were scatter'd abroad, and had travelled as far as *Antioch in Syria*, to make a Tender of the *Gospel* (d) to the *Grecians*

(a) Vid. *Grot. in Proleg. ad Luc.*
(c) Ch. xi.

(b) *Acts x.*

(d) *Ver. 20, 21.*

(says our *Translation*, but it is a Mistake in the *Original*, it shou'd be) to the *Gentiles*, such *Gentiles*, as were *Proselytes of the Gate*, of whom there was a great Number at *Antioch*; and these *believed and turned* *unto the Lord*. What occasion'd this Decree, relating to these *Proselytes* at *Antioch*, was the intemperate Zeal of some *Judaising Christians*, who came from the Council at *Jerusalem* (as they pretended) with Authority to acquaint these new Converts, that, in order to their Salvation, they were oblig'd to be *circumcis'd*, as well as *baptiz'd*, which, when it had raised no small *Dissent*, and *Disputation* among the Brethren, was referr'd to the College of Apostles (still abiding at *Jerusalem*) for their Decision and Determination, which was according to the above cited Copy of it, and pleased the new Converts so very well, that, (a) when they read it, they rejoiced for the *Consolation*, that it brought them.

The *Proselytes of the Gate* (as we said before) upon Account of their being permitted to live among the *Jews*, were oblig'd to observe whatever Laws, *Mofes* had recorded concerning them; such as that of (b) *Abstinence from Things offer'd to Idols*; that of (c) refusing to eat *Blood*;

(a) *Acts xv. 31.* (b) *Lev. xvii. 8, 9.* (c) *Ver. 10.*
that

that of refusing to eat (*a*) things strangled, and that of refraining from *Fornication*, or (*b*) such Uncleanness, as was practis'd either in *Egypt*, or *Canaan*; which shews us the Reason, why the Apostles in their Decree at *Jerusalem*, make Mention of these *four Things* so precisely, and no more; and place them in the very same *Order*, wherein they stand in the *Levitical Law*. The Eating of *Swine's Flesh*, and other *unclean Meats*, was a Thing; as abominable to the *Jews*, and as strictly forbidden by *Moses*, as was this of *Blood*; and yet they were not inserted in the Decree, sent to the Brethren at *Antioch*; because by the Law of *Moses* they were prohibited (*c*) to the *Israelites* only, and not to the *Proselytes of the Gate*.

In the Decree itself sundry Things are put together, whereof some are indifferent in their Nature, tho' others confessedly unlawful. But how many more unlawful Things might the Apostles have requir'd these new-converted Christians to abstain from, had they not thought themselves confin'd to those Particulars only, which *Moses* had made the Matter of his Prohibitions? Nay, so very exact and critical were the Apostles in this Respect,

(*a*) *Lev.* xvii. 13. (*b*) *Ch.* xviii. *passim*. (*c*) *Lev.* xvii. 15.

that we find them wording their Decree in the very same Order, wherein the Prohibitions stand in the Law of *Moses*, viz. (a) *from Meats offer'd to Idols, from Blood, from Things strangled, and from Fornication*. St. *James* indeed, in summing up the Debate in *Council*, seems not to observe the same Method; but the Order of *Things* might then be under Consideration, and not the Order of *Prohibitions*. (b) He might place them, according as they appear'd to him, to be more or less Enticements to Idolatry; first (c) *the Pollutions of Idols*, then *Fornication*, then *Things strangled*, and last of all *Blood*; for, *Blood*, whether simple or mix'd, cou'd be no very tempting Entertainment. But, when the Council came to draw up their Decree, they put them in the very same *Order*, in which *Moses* had promulgated these Laws; thereby to teach these Converts, that their embracing Christianity did not excuse them from the Observation of the *four* Particulars they were bound to before, tho' it certainly did, from any Obligation to *Circumcision*, and other Rites, which (d) *certain Men, who came down from Judea*, were endeavouring to impose upon them.

(a) *Acts xv. 29.*
(c) *Verse 20.*

(b) *Miscell. Sacra, Vol. 2.*
(d) *Verse 1.*

From what has been hitherto said it appears, that this Apostolick Decree at *Jerusalem* related only to the Christian Converts at *Antioch*, who, before their Conversion, had lived among the *Jews*, in the Capacity of *Profelytes of the Gate*, and, under that Character, were bound by the *Civil Laws* of the Country, wherein they sojourned, and from which their Conversion to Christianity (as long as the *Jewish Polity* lasted) cou'd not absolve them; but when once that Polity came to an End, then did the Prohibitions, mention'd by *Moses* and the *Apostles*, as being but the *Civil Laws* of the Land, drop with all the rest. For that this Abstinence from Blood was design'd for no more than a *temporary Injunction*, we have the Testimony of St. *Austin* to evince, who (a) tells us, that, in the *African Church*, it was little regarded, and that, in his Time, few Men thought themselves under any Obligation to observe it; and therefore, tho' we may suppose, that, for fear of giving Offence to the *Jews* and *Jewish Converts*, it might bind *Profelytes*, converted to Christianity, for some Time; yet, upon the Dissolution of the *Jewish State*, they were set free. Otherwise we must suppose, that St. *Paul*, who himself was pre-

And how
long it was
to continue.

(a) *Contra Faust.* L. 32. C. 13.

sent at the *Council*, when this *Decree* was made, acted directly counter to it, when he publish'd these general Declarations to all : (a) *Every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with Thanksgiving* : For (b) *I know, says he, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but only to him, that esteemeth it to be unclean, it is unclean.* (c) *Whatever therefore is sold in the Shambles, that eat, asking no Questions for Conscience sake; for (d) the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.*

* P. 343, &c. III. Our *Catechist* * spends no less than fifty Pages in proving and enforcing, from *Scripture*, and *Tradition*; from a similar *Practice* of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and the *Parity* of those Arguments, which are commonly alledg'd for *Infant-Baptism*; the *Duty* and *Necessity* of *Infant-Communion*; in answering the usual *Objections* that are made against it; and in representing the many *Advantages* that do attend it. 'Tis impossible to pursue him through all this *Maze* of perplex'd and intricate *Windings*; and therefore I shall content myself with making a few short Observa-

(a) 1 Tim. iv. 4. (b) Rom. xiv. 14. (c) 1 Cor. x. 25, (d) Rom. xiv. 17.

tions

tions upon some of these Points, as they happen to fall in my Way.

He pretends, indeed, that this is a Doctrine deliver'd in Scripture; but so far from this, that, in the whole Compass both of the *old* and *new* Testament, we find not one Word concerning it: and yet it is very strange, that, neither in the *History* of the Gospel, nor in the *Acts* and *Epistles* of the Apostles; neither (a) in our Lord's Institution itself; nor in St. *Paul's* (b) Recital of it to the *Corinthians*, there shou'd be the least Hint or Intimation given us of Infants Right to partake of the *Eucharist*.

Why the Practice of admitting them to it afterwards obtain'd in the Christian Church, we may form some probable Conjectures anon; but that there was no such Thing in the *Apostolick Age*, we have this presumptive Argument at least—That, when St. *Paul* reproves these *Corinthians* (c) for their indecent Behaviour at the *Lord's Supper*, occasioned by their irregular Eating and Drinking at their *Love-Feasts*, which usually preceeded it, no mention is made of Children. The *Children* of Christian Parents were not addicted to Intemperance at that Time, 'twas among the

(a) Matt. xxvi. 26.
(c) Ver. 20, &c.

(b) 1 Cor. xi. 23.

Adult only, that one was hungry, who had nothing to bring to the common Entertainment; and another drunken, who had brought enough, but taken Care to devour it all himself, before the poorer Sort came: Nor can we suppose, but that the Apostle wou'd have taken this Occasion to give his Reproofs a keener Edge upon the Account of the ill Example, these Rioters set their Children, and that in a Place dedicated to Religious Uses, had the Children, at that Time, been among their Assemblies, and permitted to join with the Adult in the Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

* P. 365. " * But were not all Children, as well
 Our Sa- " as others, to be admitted to this Com-
 viour's " munion, since our Lord says expressly,
 Words, in " (a) *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Ex-*
 the vith " *cept ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man,*
 Chapt. of " *and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in*
 St. John's " *you.*" But these Words, as I shew'd
 Gosp. ver. " before (b), are only a strong *Metaphor*, very
 53, have " common among the *Eastern Nations*, and
 no Relati- " frequently us'd by Authors of the best
 on to it. " Distinction, not to denote any *Oral* or
 " *Sacramental Eating*, but only the receiv-
 " ing and embracing by *Faith* the Doctrine
 " that is propounded to us; and, to make
 " this plainer still, we may add to what has
 " been advanc'd before, that, when in this

(a) John vi. 53.

(b) On Page 106.

Chapter

Chapter of St. John, our Lord exhorts the People to (a) *labour for the Meat, that doth not perish*, and tells them, that he *is the Bread of Life*, or the (b) *Bread of God, which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life to the World*; the Manner of eating this Bread he thus explains, (c) *He, that cometh to me, shall never hunger, and he, that believeth in me, shall never thirst*. Now if (d) the *Flesh* which Christ requireth *all to eat*, be the same with the *Bread, that came down from Heaven* (as doubtless it is) as he expressly teaches us here, that the *Eating* of this Bread does properly denote our *Believing in him*, or in his *Doctrine*, so the *Eating of his Flesh* must certainly import the same Action, and, consequently, these Words, which the *Catechist* so frequently insists on, have no Relation to the *Sacrament*, nor can they be otherwise understood, than in a *figurative* and *spiritual Sense*; whatever his Intimacy with a Set of *Romish* Writers may persuade him to the contrary.

To speak the Truth, the *Catechist*, despairing to find a Support for his *Infant-Communion* in any plain Passage of *Scripture*, was forced to have Recourse to * *Comparisons and Parallels* (as he calls * p. 344 and 362.

(a) John vi. 27. (b) Verse 33. (c) Verse 35.
(d) Verse 53.

them)

them) and *Deductions* and *Inferences* drawn from thence.

Infants partaking in Jewish and Pagan Rites nothing to the Purpose.

But these, upon Examination, will make nothing at all to his Purpose. For it cannot be much to his Purpose, sure, to put the *Jewish* and *Christian Feasts*, which God himself instituted, upon a Level with the *Pagan*, whereof the *Devil* was the prime Inventor. The Sacrament of the Eucharist (for Instance) was, in its original Design, a plain and simple Ordinance: If he, by calling in a Multitude of *Foreign Customs*, and ingrafting *unscriptural Doctrines* upon it, has made it more conformable to the *Heathen Form of Worship*; God forgive him! But how conformable soever he may suppose it to be, it does not appear from him, that the Children of *Pagan Parents* were admitted to their *Feasts* and *Sacrifices*: and therefore his Inference is too hasty and groundless, that the Infants of Christians ought to communicate in the Eucharist. *Heathen Children* were admitted to publick Sacrifices. But how? It shocks one to hear it! Why? Their Parents,

* P. 344. * he tells, made them *pass through Fire to Moloch, sometimes by offering them in Sacrifice; and, at others, by Way of Lustration.* But is not this a pleasant Way of being admitted to their Rites? Or, who wou'd from hence infer, that Christian Children, instead of being thus us'd, ought to

to participate of all the Blessings of the Eucharist? * (a) *Ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; ye cannot be Partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the Table of Devils.* What a noble Argument is this in Proof of Infant-Communion? Christ has his *Cup*, and the Devil his; Christ has his *Table*, and the Devil his: and therefore as *Heathen Infants* did participate of the Devil's Cup and Table, so shou'd *Christian Infants* participate of Christ's. But, before he had made this Inference, he shou'd have prov'd that *Heathen Infants* did actually communicate with their Parents, and others, in such Acts of Religious Worship to their fictitious Deities; and then have shewn us some Reasons, why Christians ought to imitate them in this Respect: but, even supposing he had done this, the Apostle has answer'd him very effectually; (b) *What Communion bath Light with Darkness? What Concord bath Christ with Belial! What Part bath he that believeth, with an Infidel? Or what Agreement bath the Temple of God with Idols?*

There is a greater Agreement indeed between *Jews* and *Christians*. The *Jewish* is ^{the} Chil- ^{admitted} dren tho' ^{to Circum-} were not ^{cision} admitted ^{the} *Circumcision* answers to our *Baptism*, and the *Jewish Passover* to our Sacrament of

(a) 1 Cor. x. 21.

(b) 2 Cor. vi. 14, &c.

the

to the
Passover,
till of riper
Under-
standing.

the *Lord's Supper*. *Circumcision* was given to Infants, as well as Adult; because thereby they enter'd into Covenant with God, and (a) had Sponsors to undertake for them: but the *Passover*, tho' injoin'd in general Terms, they were not allow'd to partake of, until they arriv'd to some competent Years of Understanding. This the

* P. 354. Text plainly implies, tho' * our *Catechist* wou'd have it intend quite the contrary: (b) *And it shall come to pass, when your Children shall say unto you, What mean you by this Service? that ye shall say, It is the Sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the Houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our Houses.* Which Words can certainly denote no less, than this—That, before the *Jewish* Children were permitted to come to the *Passover*, they were sufficiently instructed in the Nature and Meaning of it, which cou'd not but require some Time, and a better Capacity, than they

† P. 354. cou'd possibly have † in their very Infancy, even before they cou'd speak, or understand what was said to them: And so (if we may argue by *Analogy*) an Infant may enter into the *Christian Covenant* by *Baptism*; because the Conditions of it are so very *advantageous*, that it wou'd be Cruelty

(a) *Wall's of Inf. Bapt. Intr.* p. 59. (b) *Exod. xii. 26.*

to debar him from it, when the *Stipulations* on his Part may be made by his Sureties ; but he cannot come to *Confirmation*, wherein he takes these Conditions upon himself, much less can he be admitted to the *perfective* Sacrament of the Eucharist ; wherein all former Stipulations are confirm'd and ratified, until he be of *Maturity* enough to comprehend, what the Nature of that Covenant is, into which, by the Ordinance of Baptism, he was at first initiated.

And hence it appears that *Infant-Baptism* and *Infant-Communion* do not stand upon the same Bottom ; nor can the Arguments, alledg'd against the one, be of any Strength or Validity against the other. *Infant-Baptism* has a fair Foundation in Scripture ; *Infant-Communion* cannot pretend to any.

Infant-Baptism and Infant Communion different in their Nature and Design.

(a) *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God,* is a plain Declaration in Favour of Baptism. (b) *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you,* does not belong to *Sacramental Eating* ; and therefore has no Relation to the Eucharist. *Infant-Baptism* was (c) the Practice of the Church from the first Beginning of Christianity ; but In-

(a) John iii. 5. (b) John vi. 53. (c) Vid. Wall's Inf. Bapt. passim.

fant-Communion was neither so early nor so generally receiv'd. St. *Cyprian* is the first (for the *Apostolick Constitutions* are of no avail in this Case) that mentions it; and yet he (*a*) speaks not of mere Infants, but of Children, very probably of four or five Years old. In short, Baptism has, in Scripture, the Notion and Character of an *initiating* Sacrament; the Eucharist that of a *conclusive* or perfecting one: and therefore, as Infants for want of Faith, Knowledge, and other Qualifications, are not fitted for it, their Happiness is, that, until they grow up, they are not much in Need of it, because, by being baptiz'd, they are, in effect, Partakers of the Body and Blood of Christ, which, (*b*) according to the Sense of the Ancient Fathers, are exhibited *spiritually* in Baptism, as well as the Eucharist.

• P. 379. The Objections therefore, which our *Catechist* produces against Infants Communicating, *viz.* * “ That they are not capable of receiving the Eucharist, because they cannot answer the Ends of its Institution; they cannot do it in *Rememberance of Christ*; they are not capable of performing the Duty of *self-Examination*; they are not able to discern

The Catechist's Objections against Infant-Communion strong, but his Answers weak and trifling.

(*a*) Wall, *Ibid.* p. 513. (*b*) *Bingham's Antiqu.* B. 11. C. 10.

“ the

“ *the Lord’s Body*, or discriminate the
“ consecrated Elements from any thing
“ they eat ; they are not qualified to *shew*
“ *forth*, in this action, *their Lord’s Death*,
“ in a proper Manner ; and, as they are
“ Infants, and Innocents who have by
“ Baptism been regenerated, and cannot
“ be supposed to have lost the Grace,
“ which they already have obtain’d, in
“ this Condition they stand in no Need of
“ any Communion, but may very well
“ wait, ’till they come to Years of better
“ Understanding, and so have a more com-
“ petent Conception of it : ” These Ob-
jections, I say, are pertinent and rightly
stated ; but the Answers, that he pretends
to make to them, are so poor, so trifling,
and so evasive, that they seem to fall quite
below any other Part of his Performance.
For, how trifling is it to say, * because * P. 382
young Children are capable of Eating and
Drinking, of being brought to Christ, de-
dicated to God, and prayed for in the
Church, that therefore they are qualified
for the Reception of the Sacrament ? How
evasive is it, upon every Pinch, to fly to
this common *Fastness*, viz. that † the like † P. 382
Arguments, taken from Infants Incapacity &c.
to examine themselves, remember Christ, or
discriminate his Body, will as soon overthrow
their Right to Baptism, as to the Eucharist ?
How poor and pitiful is it to beg the
Question,

Question, and to suppose, that these Duties relate to the *Adult* only, such as are capable of performing them, but were never intended to exclude those, * who, by Reason of their Age, are not capable, and from whom God does expect no more, than they are able to do? Such thin, poor Shifts, as these, shew, that our *Catechist* had gravelled himself sadly; insomuch, that I cannot but fancy, whenever he looks upon the Strength of his *Objections*, and the Weakness of his *Answers*, he must of Necessity remember Milo's End.

However this be, we find him once more retreating under the Shelter of Tradition; and, from the Testimony of the Fathers, † P. 367. asserting, that † *Infant-Communion has very visible Footsteps in early Antiquity*: But here he is at a Loss to account for the Silence of the two first *Centuries*, and § puzzles himself not a little to find out a Reason, why a *Practice*, which he takes to be *Apostolical*, shou'd make no Appearance before the Days of St. *Cyprian*; without ever considering the Steps, that might possibly lead to it.

The probable Occasion of this Practice.

The Lord's Supper, at its first Institution, was a plain *Ordinance*, and went under no higher a Character, than (a) *Breaking of Bread from House to House*:

(a) *Acts ii. 46.*

But

but it was not long before Men began to have greater Conceptions of it. After Consecration, they look'd upon the *Elements*, as something awful and tremendous. How they came to be *the Body and Blood of Christ*, they cou'd not define; but they supposed, that there was something divine, and more efficacious in them, than mere *Representatives*. From the Words of our Saviour, *This is my Body*, they began to think first of a *mythical*, and then of a *real Presence*. The sixth Chapter of St. John's Gospel they generally applied to the Doctrine of the Eucharist; and, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, ye have no Life in you*, was supposed an Injunction, that included all; and, tho' they might not, at this Time, think, that the Sacrament did work *Physically*, or *ex Opere operato* (as the Papists now term it) yet * *a settled Principle they had* (as this Writer informs us) that *the Eucharistick Elements had such a kind of Virtue in them, as render'd the Body incorruptible*, i. e. preserv'd it till the Time of its Restoration from the Grave. No Wonder then if these Notions, mixing with the Love and tender Affection, which Parents had for their Children, prevail'd for the Custom of Infant-Communion; that they might, by this Means, secure to them an happy *Resurrection*, in Case they shou'd die in their *Minority*. Nay, and this

this Practice went so far, (a) that, in Case any did die, before the Sacrament cou'd be administer'd to them, it was no uncommon thing to give it to them after they were dead; tho' this Usage was afterwards, by many *Councils*, abrogated, and laid aside.

Thus Infant-Communion seems to have had its Rise from wrong Notions concerning some Passages in Scripture, join'd with the tender Affections of Parents to their Children. It did not appear, until St. *Cyprian's* Days, nor have we any farther Account of it till St. *Austin* became engag'd in the *Pelagian* Controversy, and then indeed we find in him a Multitude of strong Testimonies in favour of this Practice. But the Necessity of it, in order to the Salvation of Infants, seems to have been first asserted (b) by his Cotemporary *Innocent*, then Bishop of *Rome*, in his *Synodical* Epistle to the Council of *Milevis*; and so the Doctrine and Practice continued for the Space of six Hundred Years, till about the tenth Century, they both began to decline, and (c) the Custom soon was, to give Infants only the Wine by the Priest's dipping his Finger in the *Chalice*, and then putting it into the Child's Mouth to suck:

How it
came to
decline.

(a) *Cave's Prim. Christ.* P. 1. C. 11. (b) *Wall's Inf. Bapt.* P. 2. C. 9. (c) *Wall, ibid. and Bingham's Ant. Book 15. C. 4.*

But

But it was not long before even this was disus'd : For, when in the *Romish* Church the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* sprung up, it soon created such an excessive and superstitious Veneration for the outward Elements, that as the Wine was kept from *Laymen* (a) for fear of spilling the Blood of Christ, so the whole Sacrament was withheld from Infants upon the same Pretence, till at last the Council of *Trent* determin'd, (b) that it was not necessary for them, since being regenerated by the *Laver of Baptism*, and incorporated into Christ, they cannot, in that Age, lose the Grace of being the Children of God, which they have now obtain'd. And this, by the bye (according to Mr. *Bingham's* (c) Observation) " shews the Vanity of that Pretence to *Infallibility*, and unerring Tradition in the Church of *Rome*, in Matters of Doctrine, and necessary Practice ; since they themselves have thought fit to alter one Point which their infallible *Popes*, and Forefathers, for so many Ages observ'd, as necessary in communicating Infants upon a divine Command ; and shews withal, that any other Church has a better Pretence to reform any Practice, however generally observ'd, if, upon better Examination, it is found not to be grounded

Laid aside
by a Decree in the
Council of
Trent.

(a) *Burnet* on Art. 30. (b) Sess. 22. C. 4. (c) *Bingham's Ant. Book 15. C. 4.*

" upon a good Foundation in the Word of
" God."

The Mix-
ture of
Water in
the sacra-
mental
Wine, and
our Cate-
chist's No-
tion of its
Necessity.

* P. 317. Mixture was continu'd among Christians

† P. 318. || for fifteen Hundred Years together. But

|| P. 320. here it may justly be question'd, whether

No Foun-
dation for
it in Scrip-
ture.

IV. Our Catechist is no less strenuous
for the Mixture of Water in the sacramental
Wine; and therefore tells us, * that it was
us'd by Christ at the Institution; that, a-
mong the Jews, + it was look'd upon as
scandalous, and a Mark of Intemperance, to
drink Wine alone; and that therefore this

§ P. 317. since the Invitation of *Wisdom*, § in the

Book of *Proverbs*, *Come, eat of my Bread,*

and drink of my Wine, which I have mingled,

‡ P. 318. is nothing to the Purpose; since + Water

flowing from Christ's pierced Side, as well

as Blood, might be, to denote not any

Mixture in the *Eucharistick Cup*, but ra-

ther to figure out the two *distinct* Sacra-

ments, whereby *we are saved*, Baptism and

the Lord's Supper; and since (a) *the Water*,

that bore Witness of him on Earth, was

(b) *the Testimony of John*, when (c) he

saw the Spirit descend upon him, just as he

(a) 1 John v. 8. (b) Whitby in *Locum*. (c) Matt.

iii. 13, and John i. 35.

was

was baptiz'd in the River Jordan ; It may justly be question'd, whether it was a constant Custom among the Jews to drink their Wine always mix'd and diluted, since we have two Scripture Instances, wherein

But probable Presumptions to the contrary.

Water seems to be excluded. For when, at the *Marriage of Cana, in Galilee*, our Lord changed the Water into Wine, it looks as if he had made a *total Change*, and left no Mixture of Water in it, (a) because we find the *Ruler of the Feast* calling it *good Wine*, and commanding the *Bridegroom* for reserving it to the last : And when St. Paul order'd *Timothy* (b) to drink *no longer Water, but to use a little Wine for his Stomach's sake, and his often Infirmitie*s, no one can imagine, but that he meant it of pure and generous Wine, without any Mixture to abate its Strength. It may justly be question'd, whether the Cup, at the Institution, was a mix'd Cup, since the *Gospel-History* makes no mention of it ; since the *Eucharist*, in its Design, was widely different from the *Paschal Supper*, the Quantity of Wine, drank, upon that Occasion, was in no Likelihood to intoxicate ; and the more simple and unmix'd it was, the more did it represent that pure and precious Blood, which was *shed for many* for the *Forgiveness of their Sins* ; and for

(a) John ii. 9, 10.

(b) 1 Tim. v. 2, 3.

this Reason (*a*) the ancient Fathers were wont to confute the Heresy of the *Encratitæ*, who, in celebrating the Sacrament, made use of Water only, by shewing, from our Saviour's Words, that, when he called what he had consecrated (*b*) *the Fruit of the Vine*, he meant thereby pure and simple Wine without any Kind of Mixture.

But we may observe farther, (*c*) that in the Beginning of Christianity, besides the Followers of *Ebion*, who universally rejected the Use of Wine, and for that Rea-

Whence it might possibly have its Rise, and tho' it were of early Date. son were called *Aquarians*, there were others, who allow'd of Wine both in their Houses, and at the Eucharist; but, in their Evening Service, only consecrated the *Eucharist* in Wine, which in their Morning

Assemblies they did not, for fear that the Smell of the Wine shou'd discover them to the *Heathens*, and these too were called by the same Name. But whether any of these *Aquarians* gave Occasion to introduce Water into the sacramental Cup we cannot tell; this only we know, from the Testimony of *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Cyprian*, and others, that the Practice had got Footing very early in the Church. *Cyprian*, in (*d*) a long Epistle, expressly pleads for it, as the only true and warrantable Tra-

(*a*) Whitby on Mark xiv. 25.
(*c*) Bingham's Antiq. B. 15. C. 2.

(*b*) Matt. xxvi. 29.
(*d*) Ad Cæcil. 63.

dition deriv'd from Christ and his Apostles. (a) He pretends too, (as he does in some other Cases) that he had a particular Revelation for it, and endeavours to find out such mystical Meanings in it, as these --- " That the Water represents the *People*, the Wine the *Blood of Christ*; when therefore in the Cup the Water is mingled with the Wine, Christ and his People are united together: So that, in sanctifying the Cup of the Lord, Water cannot be offer'd alone, neither can the Wine be offer'd alone; for if the Wine be offer'd by itself, the Blood of Christ begins to be *without us*, and if the Water be alone, the People begin to be *without Christ*." But, how trifling soever this Way of arguing may seem to some, we are ready to grant, that the Practice, which this Father is contending for, might, in his Time, be generally receiv'd, and yet as there is no express Command for it in the Institution, nor any where else in Scripture, (b) most Divines, both of the *Roman* and *Protestant* Church, are agreed, that, notwithstanding the Testimony of several Fathers, and the general Consent of the ancient Church, this Mixture is a Thing *indifferent*, and no Ways essential to the Being and Perfection of the Sacra-

Yet is it of
no Obliga-
tion to us.

(a) Cave's Prim. Christ. P. 1. C. 11. (b) Bingham, *ibid.*

ment, as (a) *Vossius*, in his Dissertation upon this Subject, has fully demonstrated.

Love-Feasts,
what they
were, and
our Cate-
chist's
Earnest-
ness to re-
vive
them.

* P. 394.

† P. 395.

But these
prov'd to
be neither
of Aposto-
lick Insti-
tution, nor
of any
Service to
the Church
while they
continued.

V. Our *Catechist* seems very earnest likewise to revive the Use of the *Agapæ*, or *Love-Feasts*, which were Entertainments made, partly out of *Oblations* at the Sacrament, and partly out of the Contributions of the Rich; and where the Poor and the Rich feasting together at one common Table, * *the Poor were comforted* (as he tells us) and the Rich reaped the Fruits of their *Benevolence*; with many † more Commendations, wherein he displays his *Rhetorick* upon this Occasion, not forgetting, that these Feasts were not only of *Apostolick Original*, but of great Service likewise to the *Christian Church*. But here it may be question'd, whether what he asserts so boldly be true, i. e. Whether these Feasts were of *Apostolick Institution*, and whether they were of any real Service to the Church, while they subsisted? There are but three Places in the *new Testament*, where these Feasts are supposed, either to be mention'd or alluded to, and these are in the *Epistles* of three different Apostles. St. *Paul*, writing to the *Corinthians*, takes Care to reprove them for their Indecency, and Intemperance on these Occasions, and thereupon going directly to the Sacrament, (b) *Now in this, that I declare unto you, I*

(a) *Thes. Theol. p. 494.*

(b) *1 Cor. xi. 17, &c.*

praise

praise you not, that you come together, not for the better, but for the worse. For, first of all, when ye come together in the Church, I hear that there are Divisions among you, and I partly believe it; nor can your Meeting together in one Place be properly to eat the Lord's Supper, for, in your Manner of eating, every one taketh, before other, his own Supper, or the Provision, which he brought from Home to be added to the common Feast; and one is hungry (the Poor especially, who come late, and find nothing) and another is drunken (the Rich, and those that feast themselves to Excess.) What have ye not Houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not? What, shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. And then he proceeds to a full Recital of the Manner of our Lord's Instituting the Sacrament; whereby he seems to intimate, that these *Feasts of Charity* were none of his Appointment; that they were Innovations, and dangerous Innovations too, forasmuch as they introduc'd a Profanation of that sacred Ordinance, and occasion'd Men's *Eating and Drinking unworthily*, which was *eating and drinking their own Damnation*; since, after such Riot and Excess, they were incapable of discerning the Lord's Body.

St.

St. Peter, speaking of some, who were admitted to these *Love-Feasts*, gives us no advantageous Character of them, when he tells us, (a) that they counted it Pleasure to riot in the Day-time. Spots they were, and Blemishes, sporting themselves with their own Devices, or in their *Love-Feasts* (according to the right Reading) while they feast with you, being like Wells without Water, and Clouds, that are carried with a Tempest, to whom the mist of Darkness is reserv'd for ever. Nor is the Description, which St. Jude gives us of them, much unlike this: (b) These are Spots in your Feasts of Charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without Fear: Clouds they are without Water, carried about of Winds; Trees, whose Fruit withereth, without Fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the Roots; raging Waves of the Sea, foaming out their own Shame; wandering Stars, to whom is reserv'd the Blackness of Darkness for ever. Now, from all these Passages put together we may fairly draw this Conclusion-- That tho' these *Love-Feasts* were, at first, set up, not improbably without a very good Design, in Compassion to the Indigent, and for the Promotion of Love and Unity among Brethren; yet, by the Naughtiness of Men's Hearts, and a wicked Abuse of God's Creatures, they had a quite contrary

(a) 2 Pet. ii. 13, 17.

(b) Ver. 12, 13.

Effect:

Effect: They administer'd Occasion to Discord and Divisions, to Gluttony and Drunkenness, Discontent in the Poor, and an insolent Behaviour in the Rich. Bad Preparatories sure for a devout Celebration of the *Eucharist*! And therefore we can hardly suppose, that the Apostles, who, in all Things relating to the Church, were under the immediate Guidance of the Divine Spirit, wou'd have instituted a Custom, which, even without the Gift of *Prophecy*, they cou'd not but foresee, wou'd, in Time, be perverted either to the Prophana-
tion or Prostitution of the Sacrament. But the Original of these publick Entertain-
ments we may imagine to be this,---

As the Custom of *having all Things in common*, at first, cou'd not, in Decency, proceed from any *Apostolick Injunction*, but must have been the free and voluntary Offer of the Proprietors themselves (as (a) St. Peter argues the Case with *Ananias*) so when that Custom came to be inter-
mitted, and these Feasts of Charity substi-
tuted in its Room, the Apostles, for the same Reason, might not *here* interfere any more, than they did *before*, but leave the Management of *this*, as a Matter purely *secular* (and as Things of the like Nature were wont to be left) to the Conduct of

(a) *Acts v. 4.*

private

The
Changes
made in
them.

private Christians. Were it not thus, we cannot see how the Apostles, speaking to the Laity, cou'd so *emphatically* call them (a) *YOUR Feasts of Charity*, i. e. Feasts of your own Appointment, and wherein we had no Hand or Concern: How they cou'd, with so much Severity, censure and reprove every Misconduct in them; and treat the Abusers of them with so many sharp Invectives, without taking some Part of the Blame to themselves, had they been the Founders, or first Institutors of them. But now, supposing them Matters of *private* Invention, we need not wonder that we meet with so many Changes and Alterations made in them: (b) That in the Apostles Times, and the Age following, they were kept before the Communion, in Imitation of our Saviour's *Supping* before he celebrated the Sacrament; but, upon Account of some Inconveniences thence arising, before the Days of St. *Chrysostom* (as himself (c) testifies) they were not us'd to be kept 'till after the Communion was ended: That, at first, they were held in the *Churches*, to the Intent, that, from the *Reverence* of the Place, a greater Regularity and Decency might be observ'd in them; but, when the Event

(a) *Jude* ver. 12. (b) *Cave's Prim. Christ.* P. 1. C. 11.
(c) *Hom. 27. in 1 Cor.*

was far from answering Expectation, (a) by a Decree made in the Council of *Laodicea*, and another in the third Council of *Carthage*, they were quite expell'd from the *House of God*; and, being now debarr'd from all publick Assemblies, by Degrees fell away, and, in the *seventh Century* (as most imagine) dwindled into nothing: Nor must we ever expect to see them rais'd and reviv'd again, unless our *Catechist*, who (to the Credit of *Infant-Communion*) has got the Art, * I find, of lulling *Children of a Month, a Week, or even three Days old*, into a State of Decency and perfect Quiescence, while they receive the consecrated *Bread and Cup*, both separately; had found out the Secret likewise (for the Restoration of the Honour of the ancient *Agapæ*) of preaching our *Libertines* into Seriousness, our *Gluttons* and *Drunkards* into Temperance and Sobriety; but they, 'tis to be fear'd, shou'd he attempt it, (b) will be even like the *deaf Adder*, which stoppeth her Ears, and refuseth to hear the Voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely.

(a) Cave and Bingham, *ibid.*

(b) *Psalm lviii. 4, 5.*

C H A P. X.

Of some false and frivolous Doctrines.

The Catechist's Nation, that there is a proper Sacrifice still abiding in the Christian Church.

* P. 269. *Sacrifices, Offerings, and burnt Offerings for Sin* God no longer desireth, neither bath be any Pleasure therein: And yet he affirms,

† P. 272. *that* + there are plain Intimations given, by the Writers of the New Testament, of the Necessity of having still a Sacrifice in the

|| P. 277. *Christian Church*: That || as the Eucharist may be consider'd in a double Capacity: as a Sacrament; To be receiv'd by us; and as a Sacrifice, to be offer'd to God: as a

§ P. 286. *Sacrament, ¶ it is eating Christ's Flesh and drinking his Blood, under the Representative Symbols of Bread and Wine*; and as a Sacrifice, under the same Symbols, it is a

¶ P. 274. *true, proper, and propitiatory one, and ¶ what was always offer'd by the best Christians, with Hopes and Expectations of attaining thereby all the Benefits of Christ's Passion. All which Assertions we have, in a great Measure, prov'd already to be inconsistent with*

OUR CATECHIST acknowledges indeed, * that Jesus Christ, by that one Sacrifice, which he once personally offer'd, has not only made other purgative Sacrifices of the Law unnecessary, but has once for all abolish'd them, and all other Levitical Ordinances and Institutions; so that

with Truth, but let us examine them once more.

And, in the first Place, where do we meet with any sacred Writer calling the *Eucharist* a *Sacrifice*, in the Sense that our Catechist intends it? In the Words of the *Institution* there is no such Name given it; nor do we find mention of any Altar (a Thing highly requisite in a proper Sacrifice, and what * our Catechist so often inen- But we
meet
with no
Footsteps
of this in
the New
Testament.
* P. 257.
tions) whereon it was offer'd: Instead of that, it was instituted and celebrated in a *Guest-Chamber*, on a Table, and after *Supper*; nor can we perceive, by any Action or Gesture of our Lord's, that he was then employ'd in offering any Sacrifice, but only shewing to his Apostles the Method of administering a Sacrament in Remembrance of his Death, to future Communicants: And if we can find no Tokens of this in the *Institution* itself; To which of the Writers of the *New Testament* must we have Recourse? St. Paul is the Person, who has treated this Argument most fully: In his Epistle to the *Hebrews* he *professedly* handles the Doctrine of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross, and shews the Excellency of that, above any that were instituted under the Law; and yet we see he does not drop the least Word concerning the *Sacrifice of the Eucharist*, even when he had so much Occasion to do it, that it can hardly be imagin'd,

imagin'd, how he shou'd have so wholly omitted it, had it been (what others since have accounted it) as true and proper a Sacrifice, as any in the Jewish Dispensation ; or even as that, which Christ himself offer'd unto God upon the Cross.

He had consider'd the Nature of Christ's Sacrifice fully, and, accordingly places its Pre-eminence above all *Legal* Institutions in this---That, having been once offer'd upon the Cross, it was never to be repeated here again upon Earth, For (*a*) this Man, says he, *after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down at the right Hand of God, having by one Offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

Nor can there be any Reason or Occasion for it.

And indeed if Christ on the Cross offer'd a full and perfect Sacrifice unto God ; To what Use or Purpose can any other Sacrifice serve, unless it be to reflect

Disparagement upon what he has done ? (*b*) If the Merit of Christ's Sacrifice, I say, be of such Efficacy, as to expiate all Manner of Sin ; to take away all Kinds of Punishment, that are due to it ; and to procure a Supply of all the spiritual Wants and Necessities, that Christians labour under, there is certainly no Need of any farther Sacrifice. And if Christ's Sacrifice

(*a*) Heb. x. 12, 14. (*b*) Preserv. against Popery, vol. 2. p. 86.

once

once offer'd can do all this, why shou'd there be any new Offering, or any Repetition of the same Sacrifice, when, by being once offer'd, it has done the whole Business, that it possibly can do, were it offer'd never so often ? But now, if there be any kind of Sins, which, because they are daily committed, do therefore require a daily Sacrifice, notwithstanding the constant and permanent Virtue of the Cross ; or if there be any *Remains* of Punishment due to Sin, after the eternal Guilt of it is pardon'd, that continue uncancell'd, notwithstanding the Propitiation of the Death of Christ, then are his Merits (which are the whole Dependance of sinful Man) *ineffectual* ; then are we not perfectly redeem'd from all Punishment, and from the whole Curse of the Law, by the Sacrifice of the Cross ; and (a) then, may we say with the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, *is our Preaching vain, and your Faith also is vain ; then are ye still in your Sins, and we of all Men most miserable.*

It is therefore an insuperable Argument against the *Sacrifice of the Eucharist*, that it is either of no Efficacy at all, or, if it be *propitiatory*, that it is highly derogatory to the *Merits* of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross : It impeaches them of Insufficiency.

(a) 1 Cor. xv. 14, &c.

Q

We

In what
Sense the
Eucharist
may be
said to be
propitiatory.

Upon
what
false
Grounds
it is made
a Sacrifice,
the Pract-
ice of
which is
abomina-
ble.

We allow indeed that all our Religious Duties, and all our virtuous Actions may, in a large and improper Sense, be said to be *propitiatory*, as they incline God to be gracious and merciful unto us. The Eucharist in like Manner, as it exhibits to us all the Graces and Benefits of Christ's Passion (whereof Pardon or Remission of Sins is certainly a very great one) may so far be said to be *propitiatory*; but this it may do as it is a *Sacrament*, without being a *Sacrifice*, much less a *proper* and *propitiatory* one, as our Catechist (in Conjunction with the (a) Council of *Trent*) has determined it. The Truth is, why they make this Sacrament to serve in a double Capacity, this proceeds from the *two* false Nations they are willing to entertain of it, *viz.*

“ That, at the last Supper, when Christ
“ celebrated the Communion with his
“ Disciples, he offer'd his Body and Blood
“ to his Father, as a true, propitiatory
“ Sacrifice, before he offer'd it upon the
“ Cross; and that, when the Priest cele-
“ brates the Eucharist, under the Species
“ of Bread and Wine, the *natural* Body
“ and Blood of Christ are contain'd; by
“ presenting of which unto God, he makes
“ an Atonement and Propitiation for
“ Sins:” But, as we have prov'd both of

(a) Sess. 6. C. 2.

these

these to be gross Errors and Mistakes, whatever is built upon them must necessarily fall to the Ground ; and so we dismiss them with this short Remark—That, as they were not introduc'd into the Church 'till about the *tenth Century*, when Christendom was become sadly deprav'd, both in its Manners and Doctrine, they possibly might not be the *best of Christians*, who either first instituted, or much relied in the *Sacrifices of Masses*, which took their Birth from thence ; where there is too much *Gain* in the *Practice*, to make us believe there was any great *Godliness* in the *Invention* ; and where the Priest's pretending to do these two *great* Things, first, to turn the Bread and Wine into the very Substance of Christ's Body and Blood, and then to offer Christ up again to his Father, as truly, as he offer'd himself upon the Cross, must needs make these *Masses* be look'd upon, even as our Church, (a) in her Article, has thought proper to pronounce them, *Blasphemous Fables, and dangerous Deceits.*

Our Catechist lays it down as a certain * p. 278. Truth, that, * as the most honourable Service we can pay God is that of Sacrifice, so the Eucharist, as being the most excellent Worship, must necessarily be (what the

The Catechist's Notion, that the Christian Sacrifice is something more sub-

(a) Art. 31.

Q 2

Ancients

stantial
than
Prayers
and Praises
and in-
ward
Graces.

* P. 303. *tian Church, when they are in Truth the Embellishments only, and proper Dress of those who are to join in the Offering of it, whereas the Sacrifice itself, in the Scripture Notion of it, must be a substantial Thing.*

This con-
trary to
God's own
Declara-
tion.

But here it may be ask'd, Where did this Writer learn, that Sacrifice was the most honourable Service, that we can pay God?

The Word of God (if we may credit its Testimony) gives us a different Notion of this Matter. (a) *I will not reprove thee, says he to the People of Israel, because of thy Sacrifices, or for thy burnt Offerings, because they were not alway before me. I will take no Bullock out of thine House, or He-Goat out of thy Folds---Thinkest thou that I will eat Bull's Flesh, or drink the Blood of Goats? Offer unto God Thanksgiving, and pay thy Vows unto the most Highest, and call upon me in the Time of Trouble, so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise me; for whoso offereth me Thanks and Praise, he honoureth me.* Where it is plain, that he holds all outward and material Sacrifices in great Contempt, in Comparison of the devout

(a) Psalm l. 8, &c.

Breathings

Breathings of a pious Soul, the Incense of Prayer, the pure Oblation of Thanksgiving, and such other Graces and Services, as were to succeed, and quite abolish the Carnal Ordinances of the Law; and, according to the Prediction of the Prophet, be establish'd in the Christian Church for ever. When (a) *from the Rising up of the Sun, even unto the Going down of the same, saith the Lord of Hosts, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every Place Incense shall be offer'd unto my Name, and a pure Offering.* As indeed (b) no Sacrifice can be more acceptable to God, no Offering wherewith he is so well pleas'd, no Incense that is of so sweet a Savour, as the Prayers and Praises of a devout Mind, and a pure unblemish'd Conscience, especially when these are kindled and inflam'd, to the highest Degree, at the Celebration of the Holy Sacrament; when the Soul is truly sensible of the Love of God, and the infinite Kindness of its dying Saviour; when it has the *Symbols* and Representations of his Death before it, and is thereupon pouring out its grateful Acknowledgments of the inestimable Benefits, that do thence accrue to a poor distressed Sinner, and in so doing offering up a more pure

The Reason of the Thing.

(a) Mal. i. 11.

(b) Veneer on the Art. Vol. 2.

and precious Sacrifice, (a) than Thousands of Rams, or ten Thousands of Rivers of Oil.

* P. 303. 'Tis a Banter therefore put upon us, when this Writer wou'd endeavour to persuade us, that * *Words and Thoughts are*

And the
Practice of
Saints and
Angels.

of two airy and subtile a Nature, to make a real and proper Sacrifice. For what have we (besides the Dedication of our Lives to his Service) to render unto God for all the Benefits, that he incessantly showers down upon us, but the grateful Resentments of our Minds, and the joyful *Fruits of our Lips?* What have the Saints, what have the Angels in Heaven (besides the daily Office of their Ministry) more that they can do, than (b) *to fall down before him, that sitteth on the Throne, to worship him, that liveth for ever and ever, and to cast their Crowns before the Throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, for thou hast created all Things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created.* And are such *Thoughts and Words* as these of too *airy and subtile a Nature* to enter into the Ears of the Almighty? I trow not: And therefore (c) *let the Words of my Mouth and the Meditation of my Heart be always acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord, my Strength*

(a) Micah vi. 7. (b) Rev. iv. 10, 11. (c) Psalm xix. 14, 15.

and

*and my Redeemer ! 'Tis a grievous Calum- And there-
ny, therefore, which our Adversaries cast fore the
upon us, when they charge us with ha- ^{pureſt kind} of Wor-
ving no *Sacrifice*, and consequently (as they ^{ship.}
charitably tell us) no *Religion*, when we
have the best and noblest *Sacrifice*, that can
be offer'd. *For (a) I will praise the Name
of God*, says the Psalmist, *with a Song, I
will magnify it with Thanksgiving : and this
shall please the Lord better, than an Ox or
a Bullock that has Horns and Hoofs.* Ado-
ration and Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving,
devout Thoughts, pious Wishes, and di-
vine Meditations are the appointed Form of
Worship under the Christian Dispensation ;
and therefore 'tis a kind of relapsing into
Judaism, a turning back again to the *weak*
and beggarly Elements of the Law, to make
our holy Religion consist in any visible
and external *Sacrifice*, rather than in those
Oblations, that are more spiritual, and
therefore more agreeable to the spiritual
Worship, and spiritual *Oeconomy* of the
Gospel.*

Some ancient Writers of the Church in- In what
deed do frequently call the Eucharist a *Sa-* Sense the
crifice ; but then they do it in a large, and Ancients
general, and metaphorical Sense. (*b*) They called it
call it so, upon the Account of those *Obla-* and under-
ficed. stood it to
be a *Sacri-*

(a) Psalm lxix. 31, 32.

(b) *Preservat.* against Po-

pery, Vol. 2. P. 69.

tions of Bread and Wine, and other Things which, at that Time, it was the Custom for Christians to bring, when they came to the Communion. They call it so, upon the Account of those *Religious A&ts* and Offices, which are then perform'd by devout Communicants; and, both in Scripture and in the Fathers, are not uncommonly termed *Sacrifices*: But, principally, they call it so, upon the Account of its being a *Memorial* and Representation of Christ's Sacrifice upon the Cross, as we usually give the Name of the Thing itself, to what is only a *Likeness* and Resemblance of it: But that they never look'd upon it, as a true and proper Sacrifice, is plain from the Answers, they give their Adversaries, when they charge them with Impiety, for their want of Altars and Sacrifices, *viz.* (a) That God, who made all Things, and to whom all all things did belong, needs nothing from his Creatures; (b) that Christians had no other Sacrifices, than pure Hearts, clean Consciences, and a stedfast Faith; (c) That Blessing alone is God's Sacrifice, and the chief Way of worshipping him is Thanksgiving, out of the Mouth of a just Man; and that, instead of Sheep and Oxen, and the like visible Victims (as Cyril of Alexandria, (d) about

(a) Arnob. L. 7. (b) Minut. L. 8. (c) Laftant.
de vero Cultu, L. 6. (d) Contra Jul. L. 10.

the Middle of the fifth Century, answers Julian the Apostate) We offer for a sweet Saviour Faith, Hope, Charity, Righteousness, Praise, and other Virtues: but he makes not the least Mention of the SACRIFICE of the Eucharist, which cou'd not but have been greatly to his Purpose, had there been any such Thing then in the Christian Church.

As therefore the Sacrifice of the Eucha- And what
rist, or of the *Mass* (as it is commonly call'd) has no Foundation in Scripture, in Reason, or in Antiquity; has been sadly abus'd to vile Purposes, to *prostitute* the Sacrament, and to make *Merchandize* of the most holy Institution in the Christian Religion; our Church is certainly not to blame, in laying it aside, and, instead of a *Propitiation* for Sin (which Christ's Sacrifice only can be) in making it no more than an Oblation of Praise and Thanksgiving, when, in her Communion-Service, we are taught to say, *We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give Thanks to thee for thy great Glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty, &c.*

We are now come to our Catechist's frivolous Doctrines and Positions: But here we need not stay long, because we have already taken some Notice of them, and a short Inspection into them farther will be a sufficient Confutation of them. For, how

The Catechist's trifling Doctrines in Point of his Traditions.

* P. 193,
&c.

how trifling is it to contend so earnestly * for the *Observation* of *Traditions*, when they are acknowledged by all to be a very uncertain Way of Conveyance; when, at this Distance of Time, 'tis morally impossible to distinguish, which are genuine and which are spurious; from what wise Consideration, or from what wild Passions of Mankind most of them originally sprung; and when it is undeniable, that from whence soever their Origin was, if they have no Foundation in Scripture, they can never be of universal Obligation. Those Religious Rites and Ceremonies therefore, which we have only handed down to us by this uncertain Way, how weak and inconsistent a Thing is it to inculcate with so much Ardor, when, in Matters of this Kind, every Church must be supposed to have an absolute Power and Controul; when our Catechist himself acknowledges

+ P. 192. it for + a plain and evident Truth, that every particular Church may make such Laws, as are proper and peculiar to itself, and wherein it may differ from other Churches, about things indifferent; and when the learned Antiquarian (from whom he has borrow'd most of what he has) has laid it down as an Observation of his own, (a) " That this was the ancient Way of

(a) Bingham's Antiq. B. 16. C. 1.

" preserving

“ preserving Peace in the Catholick Church,
“ to let different Churches, which had no
“ Dependance in *Externals* upon one
“ another, enjoy their own Liberty, to
“ follow their own Customs without Con-
“ tradiction.”

How trifling is it to represent the solemn His *Bap-*
Rite of *Baptism* under this ridiculous Dress, *tis mal Ce-*
viz. * “ That the Person, to be baptiz'd, * P. 226,
“ must first be admitted to be a *Catechu-* &c.
“ men, which is done by *Prayer*, and *Im-*
“ *position of Hands*, attended with the
“ *Sign of the Cross*: That, being brought
“ to the Church to be baptiz'd, he must
“ stand at the Door some Time, until the
“ Priest, having blown in his Face three
“ Times, sign'd him with the *Sign of the*
“ *Cross*, and, *with Authority*, command-
“ ed the Devil to depart from him, takes
“ him by the Right Hand, brings him in-
“ to the Church, and leads him towards
“ the Baptistry: That, there standing
“ with his Face towards the *West*, the
“ Symbol of the *Prince of Darkness*, with
“ his Hands stretched out, he first re-
“ nounces him, and then, turning to the
“ *East*, an Emblem of the *Sun of Righte-*
“ *ousness*, he contracts and engages him-
“ self to him: That, then being anointed
“ with consecrated Oil (after the Bishop in
“ like Manner has consecrated the Water)
“ he is stripp'd of all his Cloaths, dipp'd,
“ or

“ or plung’d naked over Head three Times, “ and, when he comes up, is cloathed “ with a white Garment, saluted with the “ Kiss of Peace, and so admitted to a Taste “ of the consecrated Milk and Honey, and “ the like.” These Things indeed we own were Practices in several ancient Churches. They might be considered as Actions and Gestures, that had some Significance in them: But, as they were not originally in the Institution, nor any where requir’d in the Office of Baptism, they were Things of an indifferent Nature, either to be received, or rejected, as any particular Church thought fit. But when they come once to be impos’d upon us as Matters of great Consequence, necessary to Salvation, and essential to the due Administration of this Ordinance, they then lose all their Weight with us, they then come to sink in our Esteem, and, the higher their Pretensions are, the more liable they become to fall under the Character of *Trifles*.

How trifling is it to spend so much of The Sacri- his own, and his Reader’s Time, * “ in fice of the *Original* of Sacrifice; the *Mat. s.* * P. 240, “ *Materials* of which it consisted; the &c. “ *Manner* of offering it to God; the *Ends* “ for which it was offer’d; the *Manner* of “ consuming it; the great *Advantages* of “ worshipping

“ worshipping God by Sacrifice of his
“ own Institution; the several *Abu-*
“ *ses* of it, and that Sacrifice, in general,
“ is not now abolish’d under the Gospel,
“ but only such Sacrifice, as was offer’d
“ under the Law;” and all this to prove
the Eucharist to be a proper Sacrifice offer’d
unto God; which he might have done,
much more to the Purpose, from the Words
of the Institution, or any other Passage in
Scripture, where mention is made of that
Sacrament, had there been any such Thing.
But, despairing to find it there, he was
forced to take a Round for seventeen Pages
running, through all the Sacrifices under
the Law, to collect from thence what he
thought was of Use to him, and then to ap-
ply it to his Sacrifice of the Eucharist, in
forty six Pages more, all which he might
have done in the Compass of *one or two*,
had he not been minded to chican and
trifle with us, and instead of Scripture Proofs
(which he knew were not to be had) to a-
muse us with a vain shew of the Sacrificial
Rites of the *Jews*, their Significance, and
Antiquity.

We will allow our Catechist his *Kiss of*
Peace, as oft as he pleases, * after the Sa- * P. 232
crament of Baptism, and after the Eucha- and 313.
rist; his *Anointing* with consecrated Oil,
† before Baptism, at Confirmation, and at † P. 229,
the Visitation of the Sick: Nay, we will 238.
allow

The Use of the Sign of the Cross. allow him the *Sign of the Cross* (since he accounts it so * proper a Christian Mark) upon all these Occasions---- “ At the Ad-

* P. 417. “ mission of the Catechumen, at Exorcism, and anointing with Oil in Baptism; “ at the Unction in Confirmation, and of “ the Sick; and at the solemn Dedication “ to God of Persons and Things, as at “ conferring holy Orders, at the Consecration of the Eucharist, of the Water, Oil, “ and Milk and Honey for Baptism; of the “ Chrism for Confirmation, and the Oil “ for the Sick; as well as at the Beginning “ and End of his Devotions, at Rizing and “ Going to Bed, at Meals, and whenever “ he thinks fit.” But why should he perplex us with a Set of queer Latin Words (merely because they are us'd by the Romish

† P. 175. The Romish Times of Devotion. Church) † of Prime, or Matins at Six in the Morning: Tierce, at Nine, or the third Hour: Sexte, at Noon, or the sixth Hour: None, at Three in the Afternoon, or the ninth Hour: Vespers, at Six in the Evening: Compline, at Nine at Night: Nocturns, at Midnight: And Lauds, at Three in the Morning or the Time of Cock-crowing; When, in plain English, he might have told us, that whoever affects the Attainment of Heroick Piety, must pray every third Hour, both Day and Night.

The several Kinds of Wine.

Whatever our Catechist might mean in shewing us his vast Knowledge in Liquors, and

and thence informing us, * that there are and Wa-
several Kinds of Wine ; either in Respect of ^{ter.} P. 315.
the Materials, some being made of Grapes ;
some called Cyder, made of Apples ; some
called Ale, made of Malt, some made of El-
der-Berries, Currants, and other Fruits of
the Earth : Or in Respect of the Qualities,
for some is red and some is white, some is
stronger and some is smaller, some is sweeter
and some is sourer ; since, according to the
common Way of speaking, when Wine is
named, we generally mean the Juice of the
Grape : Or whatever he might mean in
shewing us his equal Skill in Waters, by
telling us, † that there are diverse Kinds of ^{+ P. 316.}
it ; either in Respect of the Materials, some
being mere natural Element ; some fictitious,
made of Cinnamon, Orange-flowers, and
other Ingredients : Or in Respect of the Qua-
lities ; for some is soft and some is hard, some
is hot and some is cold, some is running and
some standing Water, &c. since, in common
Speech (as himself acknowledges) whenever
Water is nam'd, the natural Element is al-
ways meant : Whatever his Design might
be, I say, in entertaining us in this elegant
Manner ; it grieves me to think, that, in
so trivial a Matter, he shou'd take such
infinite Pains as § to ransack the Scripture
and its Phraseology ; to run through the ^{§ P. 317.}
History of Judæa ; to search into the Cus-
toms of the Passover ; to enquire into the

And the
Sacramen-
tal Mix-
ture.

Practice

Practice and Doctrine of the ancient Church, and, in short, *to compass Sea and Land*, as our Saviour calls it, and all this to find out a little *Water* in the *Eucharistick Cup*; when neither in the Institution itself, nor in any other Part of Holy Writ, we hear one Syllable of this *Divine Mixture*, as he calls it; when (a) *the Fruit of the Vine*, in its plain and natural Sense, one wou'd think, shou'd signify nothing else, but *simple Wine*; when *simple Wine*, upon several Occasions, the *Jews* were not unaccustom'd to drink; when the *Quantity* of *Wine* at the *Sacrament* was too small to intoxicate; and when the more generous it was, the better and more lively Emblem it exhibited of the precious *Blood of Christ*.

And Infant-Communion.

Nor can we but regret the Loss of Time, when we are forced to follow him through his tedious Disquisition about the Right of Children to partake of the *Eucharist*,

* P. 343, " * through his pretended Arguments from &c. " Scripture; the similar Practices of *Jews* " and *Gentiles*; his Parallels between Infant-Baptism and Infant-Communion; " his Proofs from the Tradition of the " Church, and the Testimony of the Ancients; his Objections which, in my " Opinion, much outweigh his Answers; " and his long Display of the sundry Ad-

(a) Matt. xxvi. 29.

" vantages

vantages that wou'd accrue to the Christian Church from a *Revival* of this Practice," when every one must own, unless he supposes, that the Sacrament works *Physically*, that Children are utterly incapable of reaping any Benefit from it; that they are not qualified to answer the Ends of it; nor are they supposed to be invited to it, until they are sufficiently instructed to understand its Mystery. Whatever the Practice therefore was in former Times, since there is no positive Precept for it in Scripture, it might have lawfully been laid aside by any Church at any Time: And 'tis something of a Wonder to me, that our Catechist shou'd be so very earnest for reviving it, when the Church of *Rome*, so fond of Tradition, has thought proper to let it expire, without ever thinking of its Restoration.

Thus we have just pointed out some of the vain and frivolous Things, which this Writer has thought fit to assert, and maintain, with a great Air of Seriousness and Gravity. He has taken them, 'tis true, from Mr. Bingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church*: But little did Mr. Bingham think, when he was compiling that learned and laborious Work, that it wou'd ever enter into the Head of any one to extract a *System of Religion*, so nearly resembling

With a
brief Vin-
dication of
Mr. Bing-
ham and
his An-
quities.

bling Popery, from it: (a) That the Customs, Usages, and Practices of the Church, which he had digested under proper Heads, in the same Manner, as others had done the Greek, Roman, and Jewish Antiquities, shou'd be garbled, and singled out, as they suited such a Man's Turn; then recommended under the Character of *original* and *Apostolick* Traditions; and so made essential to the due Constitution of any Church, and necessary to the regular Administration of every Ordinance. Little did Mr. *Bingham* dream of this, I say: His Business was, as an *Antiquarian*, to take notice of every little Custom in the Primitive Church, and to reduce them under fit Divisions; but he never forgets to speak of them, as things of an indifferent Nature, and what other Churches had a Right either to receive or reject. He no where pleads the universal Obligation of them; but, in many Places (as particularly in (b) the Cases of Infant-Communion, and the Sacramental Mixture) offers Reasons in Justification of those Christians, who, upon better Consideration, have thought proper to depart from them. This was the Conduct of the modest Mr. *Bingham*; but our Catechist (who has borrow'd so many good Things

(a) Vid. his Preface.
and C. 2. Sect. 7.

(b) Book 15. C. 4. Sect. 7.

from

from him) has forgotten to take *this* of Modesty along with him, and chooses rather to assert, that such Rites and Customs, as he had been mentioning, * are the *Common** P. 191; *Law*, as the *Decrees of Councils* were the *Statute-Law* of the Church; and that no Church can be *rightly constituted*, which does not observe them, or † has any *Laws* † P. 192: differing from, or repugnant to them.

Under this Head of false and frivolous Matters, his frequent Misconstructions and Misapplications of Scripture Passages may not improperly be reduc'd. For, who wou'd ever have thought, that the Words of St. Paul, speaking of his own, and the other Apostles Ministry in the Gospel, (a) *We are unto God a sweet Savour in Christ*, to them that are saved, and to them that perish; shou'd have been produc'd as a Proof of § the *Uncion*, *Imposition of Hands*, § P. 239. and the *Bishop's Prayers to God* in the Office of Confirmation? That his directing the *Ephesians* (b) to pray always, with all Prayer, and Supplication for the Saints, should imply their Petitions and Intercessions || not for the Living, but the Dead? || P. 337. And his Exhortation to *Timothy*, that (c) *Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and Giving of Thanks might be made for all Men*, shou'd not signify the common Offices, that one

(a) 2 Cor. ii. 15. (b) Eph. vi. 18. (c) 1 Tim. ii. 1.

• P. 334. Christian owes to another, but * *the Eucharistick Sacrifices of the Mass?* Who wou'd ever have thought, that, in the Book of Proverbs, *Wisdom*, by the several Metaphors of (a) *killing her Beasts, mingling her Wine, and furnishing her Table*, shou'd prefigure the Divine Institution of *the Mixture of Wine and Water in the Eucharist?* That the Author of the *Hebrews*, speaking of the Pre-eminence of Christ's Sacrifice above thofe, that were under the Law, by (b) *the Body*, which, at his Incarnation, *God had prepared him*, shou'd

† P. 256. not mean the *natural Body*, † but a *Body to be eaten, and therefore the Sacramental Body of Christ?* Or that St. John's Words, (c) *There is a Sin unto Death, I do not say, that ye shou'd pray for it*, shou'd be so manag'd and interpreted, as to be made a

§ P. 337. strong Argument § in Favour of *Prayers for the Dead?*

These and many more Instances may be given of his Misapplications of the *plainest Texts in Scripture*; let us now see a little what Work he makes (where he has a greater Latitude) with thofe, that are known to be more *difficult and abstruse*.

(d) *What shall they do, who are baptiz'd for the Dead, if the Dead rise not at all?*

(a) *Prov. ix. 2.* (b) *Heb. x. 5.* (c) *1 John iii. 16.*
(d) *1 Cor. xv. 29.*

Why are they then baptiz'd for the Dead? is allow'd to be a difficult Passage in St. Paul, and yet it is capable only of these three Senses — It must either allude to a Custom (as some think) of baptizing others, in the Room of those, who died without Baptism; but (a) of this Custom we have no Intimation given us either in Scripture or Antiquity: Or (as the Ancients thought) it must mean *being baptiz'd for the Resurrection of the Dead*, i. e. in Expectation and Belief of that Fundamental Article of the Christian Faith: Or (as some later Interpreters think) by *the Dead* we are here to understand *Christ*, in whose Name we are all baptiz'd, and therefore *to be baptiz'd for the Dead* is the same, as being baptiz'd *on the Account*, or *for the Sake of Christ*; and so the Apostle's Argument will run thus—
(b) *Now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the first Fruits of them that slept; else, or were it not so, what will they do, who are baptiz'd for the Dead?* Or upon the Account of one, that is dead, as Christ must necessarily be, if there be no such thing as a Resurrection. “ We indeed (might the Apostle say) who think otherwise of him, who are convinc'd of his particular Resurrection, and thereupon preach a general Resurrection to

(a) Whitby in Locum.

et al.

(b) 1 Cor. xv. 20.

“ others,

“ others, may well be baptiz’d in his
 “ Name ; but why are they so who be-
 “ lieve him dead ? Or what Motive have
 “ they, in this publick Manner, to own a
 “ dead Man for their Lord and Saviour ?”

These are the most considerable Interpretations, that are given of this dark Passage : None of them ’tis plain cou’d suit this Writer’s Purpose : and yet, because he found the Word *dead* in it, he cou’d not but think, that, some Way or other, * *it was deſign’d*

* P. 337 *for their Benefit*, and was therefore resolv’d to make it a Scripture Proof for *his praying for the Faithful departed*. (a) *The unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the Husband, else were your Children unclean, but now are they holy*, is another Text that has given great Perplexity to Expositors ; and yet this Writer, because he finds the Word *Children* in it, draws an Argument thence for the Duty and Necessity of *Infant-Communion*, tho’ the Apostle’s Purpose is only to require married Couples (tho’ of different Religions) to live amicably and quietly together upon this Consideration—(b) that, tho’ one of the Parents was an *Heathen*, yet, as the *Denomination* was to be taken from the *better*, their Offspring were not to be esteem’d as *Heathens*, i. e. *unclean*, but

(a) 1 Cor. vii. 14.

(b) Whitby in Locum.

holy,

holy, as all Christians by Denomination were.

Another Text, of no very easy Interpretation, is that to the *Hebrews*, where the Apostle speaks of the Privileges and Advantages, that the ancient *Jews* enjoy'd during their Sojourning in the Wilderness.

(a) *They did all eat the same spiritual Meat, says he, and did all drink the same spiritual Drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock, that followed them, and that Rock was Christ;* and yet our Catechist, because *Meat* and *Drink* are therein mentioned, from thence takes Occasion to plead the Right, which Infants, as well as the *Adult*, have to partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Words very possibly might have small Analogy to this Matter; but it seems incongruous to build a positive Doctrine upon Texts, that are, in a great Measure, obscure and unintelligible; and yet it is observable, that not only our Catechist, but almost all the greatest Writers of the *Romish* Communion, choose to shelter themselves under the Covert of such Passages, as to other Men of moderate Skill and Capacities are utterly impenetrable. Here they think they may wantonize, and impose what Senses they please, because they imagine no Man *perceives* it. And, as they

(a) *Heb. x. 3, 4.*

make

make thus free with many Parts of Scripture, so there is none wherein they exercise a greater Latitude, than in St. Paul's Epistles, (a) in which they know that (according to the Character his Brother Apostle gives us of them) there are many things hard to be understood, which not only they, that are unlearned and unstable, but they likewise, that are prejudiced and designing, wrest (as they do also the other Scriptures) to their own Destruction.

The CONCLUSION.

THUS have I given you, Sirs, my Sentiments and Observations upon this Writer, and his Performance, and with all the Meekness and Candor, that the Nature of the Provocation, which he has given to the Protestant World, cou'd any Ways deserve, Others may confute him with more Learning, more Accuracy, and a greater Strength of Reason: 'Tis enough for me, that I have pointed out the Game; shewn you the Track, that he usually takes; the many Turnings and Windings he is apt to make, and endeavour'd, as well as I cou'd, to animate the Chase. You, who live in a nearer Vicinity, have better Opportunities of perfecting what I

(a) 2 Peter iii. 16.

have

have just begun : And, to encourage you to that, permit me to conclude with this Word of Exhortation :

That, as *Christians*, you wou'd not only (a) *bold fast the Profession of your own Faith without Wavering*, above (b) *the Sleight of Men, and cunning Craftiness*, whereby they lie in wait to deceive ; but, as able Ministers of the *Gospel* likewise, labour earnestly to preserve others (those especially, (c) *over whom the Holy Ghost has made you Overseers*) from the Power and Possession of *Seducers* : That as *Protestants* (whatever Veneration you may have for the *Ancient Writers of the Church*) *the Scripture*, (d) *that was given by the Inspiration of God*, shou'd be your only Rule of Faith, your Standard of Doctrine, and Pillar of Truth; and (whatever your Sentiments may be of the Rites and Ceremonies, which some are apt to call *Apostolical*) the Apostle has told us, that (e) *the Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink*, or other such like trivial Matters, but *Righteousness and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost* : That, as *Protestants of the Church of England*, your Endeavour shou'd be to vindicate her Reformation from the Slanders and Reproaches of her *Adversaries*; to detect those, who under

(a) Heb. x. 23.

(b) Eph. iv. 14.

(c) Acts xx. 28.

(d) 2 Tim. iii. 16.

(e) Rom. xiv. 17.

The Conclusion.

the Mask of Friendship, are carrying on the Designs of Enemies ; and, either by open Assaults, or secret and undermining Approaches, are labouring to destroy our happy Constitution ; and to silence the Clamours of all such, as from a Pretence of our having either too *many*, or too *few* Ceremonies in our Worship, are incessantly striving for a Super-Reformation : That, finally, as you are particularly situated and appointed, you shou'd, in the Phrase of the Prophet, *(a) stand continually upon the Watch-tower in the Day-time, and sit in your Ward whole Nights*, in order to descry the Enemy, what Sallies and Movements they make, what Colours and Disguises they put on, the better to surprize us unawares. Your Ancestors, Gentlemen, signalized themselves in the Defence of the *Protestant Cause*. They were placed (where you are) as a *Barrier* against the Invasions of *Papery* from the *North*. By Descent you are become their Sons ; and as the great *Carthaginian* was by his Father, so by them have you been initiated, at the very *Altar*, I may say, into an *Hereditary Aversion to Rome* : Your Province, therefore, is to behave manfully upon all such Occasions as this ; *(b) to be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might* ; but nevertheless,

(a) Isa. xxi. 28.

(b) Eph. vi. 10.

(a) in

(a) in Meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of the Truth.

Now unto him, that is able to keep us all from falling, and to present us faultless, before the Presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy: To the only wise God, our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now, and ever. *AMEN.*

(a) 2 Tim. ii. 25.

F I N I S.



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